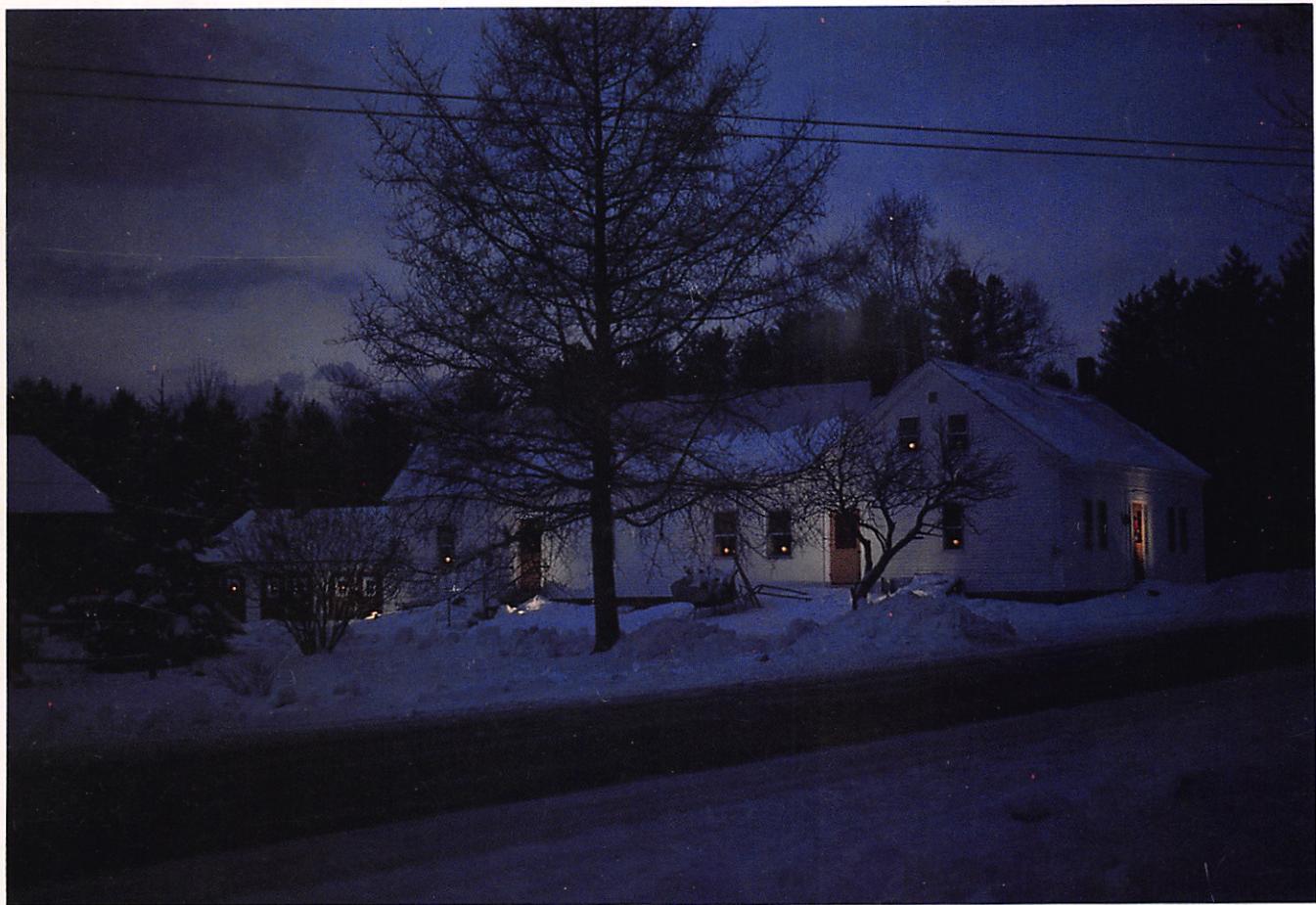


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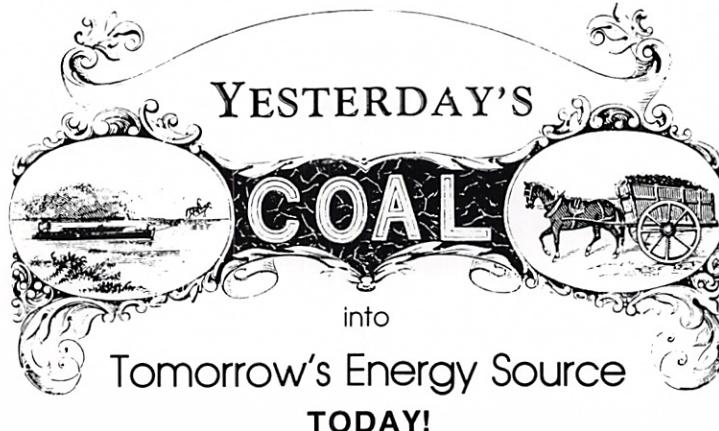
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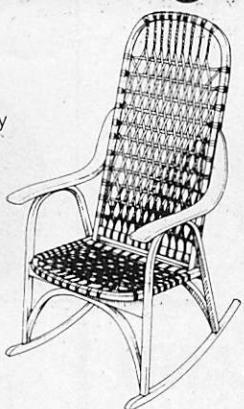
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BitterSweet Views

Rosy Cheeks & True Hearts

Yankee Humor. Some would say it's nonexistent. To others, it's dry, pointed, and slyly witty. But humor is part and parcel of rural life everywhere. One of our most famous local humorists (featured on page 7 of this issue), Artemus Ward (a.k.a. Charles Farrar Browne of Waterford, Maine), explained Life in the Northeast—over a hundred years ago:

"Here the people have eccentricities enough to be interesting. Here they can invent, chop, swap, work, and (if necessary) fight. Here there is maple sugar, virtue, shrewdness, strong arms and big chests, pickerel, rosy cheeks and true hearts, ever-busy knitting needles, cream, an undying love for Bunker Hill, honey, patriotism, stocking yarn, mountains, ponds, hoop-poles, churches, school-houses, pine logs, scenery that knocks Switzerland into a disordered chapeau, and air so pure that the New Yorker is sorry he can't bottle some of it and carry it to the metropolis for daily use."

Artemus Ward had probably never seen Switzerland (he died during his first European tour) but his home town was (and is) beautiful enough, and he can certainly be forgiven his patriotic fervor. It is nice to know that, in spite of acid rain and foreign wars, Waterford, Maine, . . . and hundreds of other little places in New England, remain the residence of rosy cheeks and true hearts, and humor to sustain them.

It was Artemus Ward's "High Handed Outrage At Utica" which amused President Abraham Lincoln so much that he read it to his Cabinet—just before presenting the Emancipation Proclamation.

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Cover Christmas at Night by Juanita Perkins, Lovell, Maine.

October Cover Credit was inadvertently omitted for the owner of the "white charger" in Dodo Knight's splendid photo. The purebred Maine Arabian stallion is Mt. Hope Karim, 17, standing at stud at Bilahn farm in Hiram, Maine. Ahna Ayasse is the owner.

HAPPY 6th BIRTHDAY!

We enjoy BitterSweet,...devour it from cover to cover (Even the ads get our attention, for although it isn't likely that we'll patronize your advertisers often, I called a friend in Lewiston awhile ago, and she went shopping for me...all as the result of an ad in BitterSweet.)

We moved to Las Vegas five years ago, until then, we had lived more than thirty years in Franklin and Androscoggin Counties. Stories about that area and the people there are, needless to say, of special interest to us.

Keep up the good work. We'll continue to wait...as patiently as possible...for the next month's issue.

Rachel E.H. Spiller
Las Vegas, Nevada

When I was living "out-of-state"
Wherever I would roam
There was always BitterSweet
And it was always HOME.

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And read from cover to cover
There was nothing else quite like it
There could never be another.

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And, in my mind, I knew
The changes that were taking place
In the towns in which I grew.

There were recipes to try out
And pictures from days of yore
Stories, poems and memories
And always much, much more.

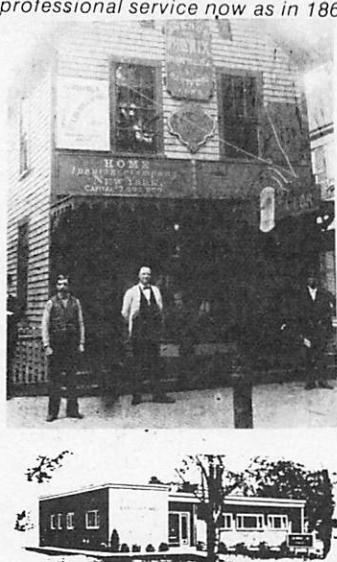
There is no way to tell you,
No way to make you know
How much you've come to mean to me,
How much I love you so!

Now that I'm at home again,
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A Wedding Tribute in Waterford

When you were growing up, wasn't there a person you admired more than the rest of your friends and relatives? For me, one of those people was my cousin William Harry—known to one and all as "Dood," from a childhood nickname given him by his father, my Uncle Bill.

We're the same age—Dood was born seven months after I was, but now (at 6'6") is more than a foot taller. He grew long and lean (like the men of the family), while I (like the women) grew short and plump. I must admit I think we both overdid it!

We used to play together in South Waterford, the small village I envied him because he lived there always, and I, only part of the time. But, later on, I think he envied me the time I lived there, during the last winter of our much-loved grandfather Harry.

Anyway, we (with his brother Rick) used to "build" houses in the hay lofts and under the lilacs and "hills of snow" between our Uncle Arthur's and Aunt Alice's homes (we were very privileged—this was a village of our relatives, you understand). I still bear an interesting little scar along one eyebrow as the result of breaking up housekeeping!

Looking back, I realize just how much we shared then. Car sickness on trips to Six Gun City or Santa's Village with my parents. Our first movies in Bridgton with his mother—now we're both movie aficionados. Summer jobs from the age of eleven at the family campground. (Of course, he got the fun jobs, like driving the old truck and collecting garbage; I only got to clean bathrooms and work in the store!)

There were beach parties in July and games of "63" at Thanksgiving. There was high school, where he was a varsity basketball star, I was a junior varsity cheerleader, and his dad and mine embarrassed us by yelling loudly from the bleachers. Dood used to help me with my French grammar and I helped him with translation. When we both got to college at Orono, I couldn't do my own French grammar, but I could introduce him to the cute girls in my dorm.

Well, it was rather like having a "big brother," I suppose—bittersweet. But I'm proud of him, and I hope he's a little proud of me. Our shared background seems to have led us in similar directions. I had my South Waterford home for a while; he still has his. We had another aunt who once encouraged us to write and play the piano. Now we write for our bread and

butter, enjoy music . . . and remember the old stories she told us.

Dood has also been the photographic backbone of *BitterSweet* ever since its beginning, with the darkroom in his home. You will see some of his own fine photography in an upcoming issue.

This is all by way of saying "Congratulations" to Dood on the occasion of his wedding a few weeks ago. He and his wonderful wife India provided a beautiful celebration at the Artemus Ward House, with horses in the paddock, candles everywhere, great food, autumn leaves, interesting people, and some terrific home-grown music.

It was a party which served to remind me that this holiday season is a time for humor, good food, and family memories made great by us. There's a lot of that in our new issue. (And wait until you see next year's new issues! Wow—today's the day to subscribe!) Our next issue is in January.

To my family, scattered around the country, I wish the happiest of holidays. To Rick, in Alaska, good cheer. To my brother Alan and his wife Debbie in New Hampshire; and to my children Tracy and Tommy in Maine, much love. To my sister Linda and her family in Los Angeles, as well as my travelling parents on the road, we miss you. To the aunts and uncles and cousins in Florida, Arizona, Montana, Indiana, Wisconsin, North Carolina, Texas, Virginia, Kentucky, and Canada; and to friends from New York to the Philippines, we hope you keep a little of New England in your hearts.

Best wishes to our readers, new and old, best wishes from the new publishers, Judy Moneypenny and Elaine Dougherty, from the sales staff, and from me—

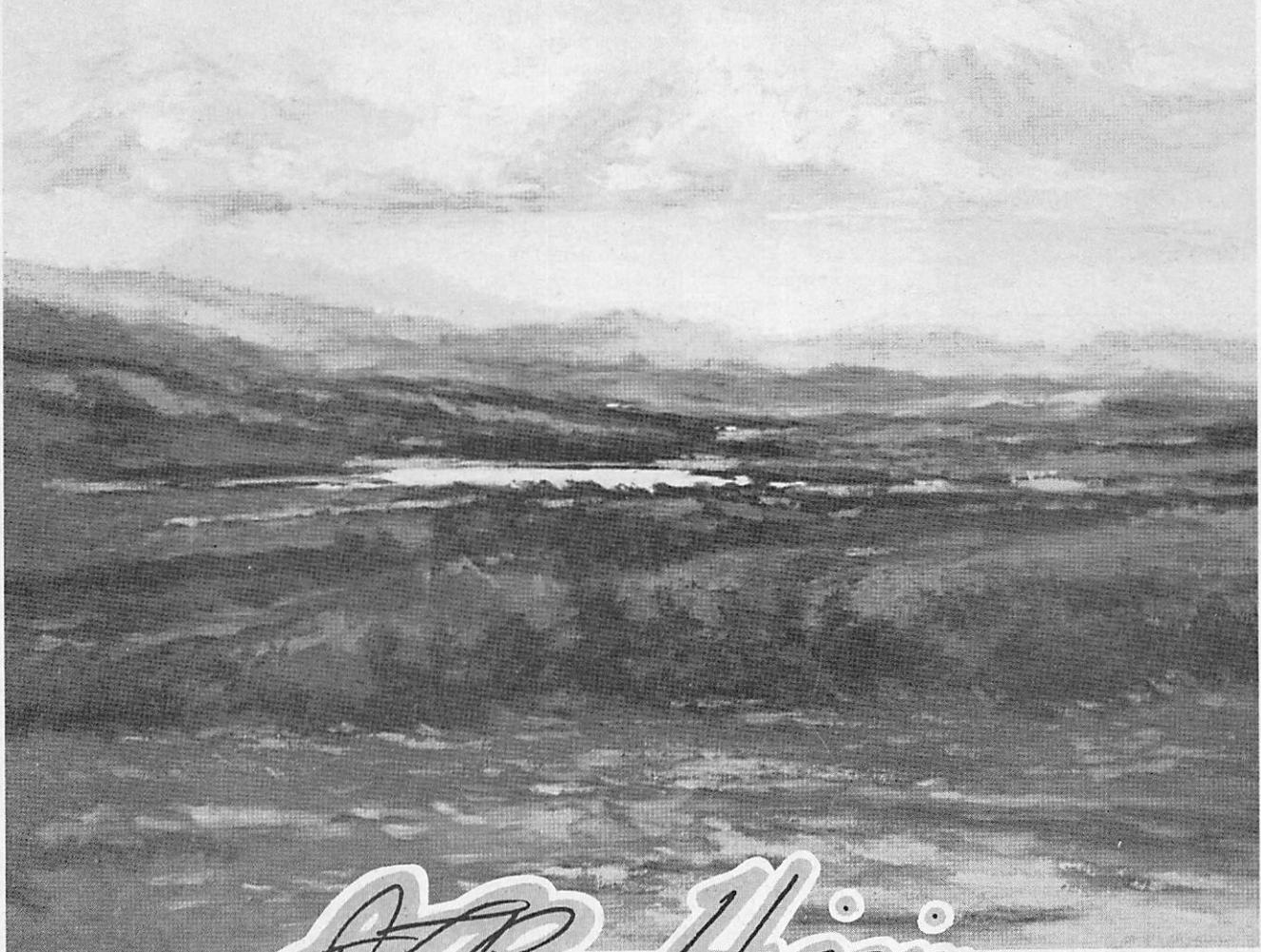
Nancy Marcotte

Readers' Index: There has been a slight delay in producing our index of all past issues. Expect to see it in a few weeks. (50¢ and S.A.S.E.)

YOUNG MAN WITH GUITAR

In his room
 oblivious to all
 except
 the magic key to rapture
 in his hands,
he plucks
 with soft, sweet melancholy
 heartstrings
 thoughts
 the pen above the pad,
and—from the ragged trees
 beyond the glass—
 the tarnished, rainwet leaves
 enroute to dying.

Pat White
Otisfield



CROWELL POND FROM BERRY HILL
Oil on Canvas 24" x 28" 1982

SKOWHEGAN PAINTER IN THE ROMANTIC MANNER

by Nancy Marcotte

J. Thomas R. Higgins is a landscape painter. James Carpenter of the Colby College art department describes him thus:

"In his response to light and to other qualities of nature he is taking his place among a growing group of 'painterly realists' in America today."

The grand prize winner of the 1981 All Maine Biennial art show, Tom Higgins lives and works in an old cape, painted red with white trim, way up in Skowhegan.

Skowhegan is a very, very neat village of straight and self-restrained frame buildings which sparkle white, lining the streets just one house deep. There is seldom anything between the street you're on and pure,

unbounded fields which leap away across the hills to a vast and rolling horizon. There is an exuberance to nature there which seems to tell you that life pulses beneath the soil.

For Tom Higgins, the excitement of the surrounding landscape is the reason for living, the reason for painting. High up on a hill sits his home/studio, surveying the woods and fields below in all directions. A white canoe leans upside down and precisely against a stone wall there—a testimony to the man who'd rather be outside than in.

"Landscape painters are especially affected by their environment." The lean, fair-haired

man speaks in a room full of painted views, small and large. "I like to go out and paint the same view at different times of day and different seasons." He works on small panels—an intimate scale, like taking notes—which can be packed back to the studio and redone on a larger scale during his winter production schedule.

This is an old tradition, a romantic manner of painting dating back to the mid-1800's and the English landscape painters, Turner and Constable (if not further, to Velazquez, Rembrandt, and the baroque idea of truth through the reflection of light).

Love of nature was the landscape artists' first characteristic, and with that the belief

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that nature could be imbued and conveyed with human feeling. It was a spiritual conception which awakened the eyes of artists to the world around them—and gave the impressionists their first look at vivid natural beauty portrayed in light and color.

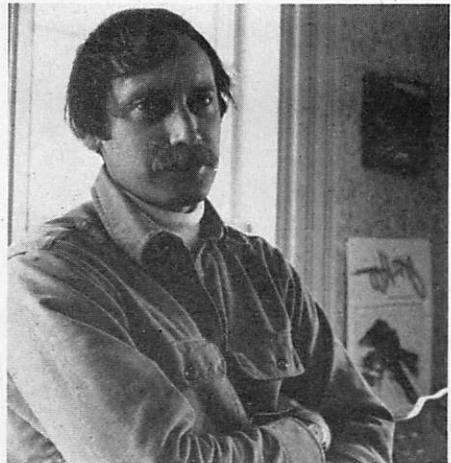
Tom Higgins is a direct descendent of this manner of painting. It has been said that one could "predict tomorrow's weather" from Constable's painted skies. This clarity and reality is also present in the skies of Tom Higgins. This is also why he paints in oil—the medium of tradition.

"I tried painting in acrylics for a while," he says. "My students were using it and I thought, as a teacher, I should know more about it . . . but I like to work as directly as possible, blending colors, wet into wet. Oil is more versatile . . . the color is also more believable—softer, not as garish. Oil paint has a mellow luminosity."

He works directly, emphatically, with 20th century brush strokes and pure color—suggesting natural reality by those tones, colors and strokes of paint, not by line or excessive detail. It is a soft-focus, emotional look at the real world and its pattern and movement; thus a more "painterly" approach than many artists working today.

Tom Higgins grew up in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, another rolling area of landscape painters. He attended college in Tennessee and graduate school in Wisconsin; eventually coming to teach at Marietta College in Ohio, where he met his artist-wife, Chris. About eight years ago he left Marietta and a heavy teaching load which allowed him little time to paint, for New England and job hunting. He landed at Colby College in Waterville—a fine place to teach except that, without tenure, he had to leave in four years. He explored outside Maine for a time, but flying back in "over the marshes and bogs" convinced him that he didn't want to leave this environment. He and Chris (Skowhegan's high school art teacher) acquired their cape and settled in with children Erin and Brendan (now 8 and 3, respectively). It's a house they are beginning to restore, with Chris doing a lot of old-woodwork-stripping and record-researching.

"I feel the harshness of Northern Life keeps you vital and alive," Tom insists. It has been, unfortunately, a somewhat tenuous existence for the painter—commuting at various times to teach at U.M.O. and U.S.M. Presently, he teaches (temporary, full time) at the Farmington campus of the University of Maine, bringing a "smattering" of art subjects (drawing, designs, painting, pottery, art ed. and a little history) to students whose primary focus is elsewhere—like Elementary Education.



It does give him the chance to "squeeze in" painting time, in the medium he enjoys most. Last fall, Higgins' work emerged into Maine's consciousness with a sparkling show entitled "Paintings of the Last Decade" at the University of Southern Maine Art Gallery in Gorham. Seventy-three paintings were loaned by private collectors, the artist, and Baridoff Galleries, which represent him in Maine. Tom says it gave him "the opportunity to reassess my tendencies, to see what's really me. There have been departures, momentary infatuations with someone else's work, but that's not really me, so in the long run I always come back to expressing my feelings."

This chance to re-focus has resulted in new work that offers a succinct vision which does not allow you to forget the real world. On each canvas is a perfectly framed section of nature, wherein one might seem to feel the sharp edge of rock or squint one's eyes in the sunlight.

In the brochure for Higgins' show, James Carpenter says, "Sometimes it is the wind's energy that is caught. Another time it is the pattern of sunlight and shadow on the snow, or the scattered colors of grasses and flowers in a field, or the liveliness of water reflections, or the serrated coastal rocks of Indian Point, Georgetown. In all of these we feel a fusion of the vitality of nature and the energy of the artist's response to it."

The trade-off for being allowed to enjoy the view in Maine has been to limit the visibility of his work. It does sell, though to out-of-state corporations and financial institutions, where the art money is. A large Higgins landscape hangs in a conference center in Saudi Arabia, for instance. "I'd love to sell to private collectors, too," he says. "I think they'd appreciate them more."

Would that we all could own a Higgins. His is a singular talent in a state full of copycat voyeurs.

"There is really nothing very remarkable in my history," Artemus Ward said of himself in a letter to a friend. But he was wrong. In the short thirty-three years of his life, he was a popular newspaperman, a best-selling author, a world-renowned lecturer, and the favorite comedian of President Lincoln.

Artemus Ward The Homely Philosopher of Waterford, Maine

by Linda J. Davis

Charles Farrar Browne, known to the world by his pen-name of Artemus Ward, was born April 26, 1834, in the quiet little village of Waterford, Maine.

Levi and Caroline Brown, Charles' parents, were natives of Waterford. Levi, a very honest and competent businessman, died early, leaving twelve-year-old Charles and his older brother Cyrus to care for their mother.

Charles was very fond of his mother, and they had a close relationship. As he grew older, Charles called Caroline by her first name—partly because the two were more like sister and brother than mother and son, but also because of Charles' humorous manner. Author Don Seitz, in his *Biography and Bibliography of Artemus Ward* (1919), wrote that Caroline was "sternly practical in all things, keen and shrewd . . ." yet Charles could always draw out her unconscious humor, and he loved to do so.

Charley Brown was a practical joker all his life, but he was never malicious with his jokes. He was as willing to be the butt as he was the joker. There were many local stories about Charley's pranks. Another biographer, James Austin, wrote that "He is credited with having slipped a pack of playing cards into the minister's gown so that, as the poor man administered the rites of baptism in the river, the cards came floating to the surface."

Charles' brief formal education ended soon after the death of his father, and at thirteen he was sent to Lancaster, New Hampshire, to learn the printing trade. For nearly a year he worked as a typesetter, which in those days was a skill greatly in demand; then he returned home to Maine and began working for the paper his brother edited, the *Norway Advertiser*. While working in Norway, Charles furthered his education at the Norway Liberal Institute. After a few months, he moved on to Skowhegan, where he worked for the *Clarion*; he disliked working there, however, and soon returned to Waterford.

At the age of fifteen, Charles left Maine for Boston and a paper called the *Carpet Bag*, where he acquired a skill for writing almost anything. The demands of publication were steep, but Charles met them all. All his *Carpet Bag* stories, written under the pseudonym "Lt. Chubb" (an anagram for the name Charles Brown and an ironic comment on Brown's thinness), had a distinctly down-east flavor.



The *Carpet Bag* folded and Charles travelled around the South and West for two years. In 1854, he settled down in Toledo, Ohio, and worked his way up from compositor to local editor. He soon became so well known that he was invited to become the commercial and city editor of the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, one of the oldest, most solid papers of the midwest.

One of the most colorful accounts of Charles F. Brown, editor, was provided by James Ryder, a famous photographer in nineteenth-century Cleveland:

On going into the Plain Dealer editorial-rooms one morning, I saw a new man and was introduced to him by head bookkeeper Charles E. Wilson as Mr. Brown. He was young, cheerful in manner, tall and slender, not quite up to date in style of dress, yet by no means shabby. His hair was flaxen and very straight; his nose, the prominent feature of his face, was Romanesque—quite violently so, with a leaning to the left. His eyes were blue-gray, with a

twinkle in them; his mouth seemed so given to a merry laugh, so much in motion, that it was difficult to describe, so we'll let it pass. It seems as though bubbling in him was a lot of happiness which he made no effort to conceal or hold back. When we were introduced, he was sitting at his table writing; he gave his leg a smart slap, arose and shook hands with me, and said he was glad to meet me. I believed him, for he looked glad all the time. You couldn't look at him but that he would laugh. He laughed as he sat at his table writing, and when he had written a thing which pleased him, he would slap his leg and laugh.

It was during his *Plain Dealer* sojourn that Charles Brown began writing his Artemus Ward letters—strange, misspelled epistles "To the Editor" which were so funny they made the pseudonym more famous than his own name. Artemus was supposedly an illiterate old showman who delighted newspaper readers with letters about his "moral wax works," "snaix," and "wild beasts of pray."

"In fact, Artemus represented the typical American as caricatured by Charles Brown," James Austin wrote, "Far from perfect, not always logically consistent, scoffing at scholarship and pomp, materialistic and self-reliant, Artemus was good-hearted, unsentimental, and an enemy of hypocrisy in everyone but himself."

Artemus used not only misspellings and comic dialect, but also homely figures of speech: "If so be you wants to see me, say so," he said to President-elect Lincoln, "if not, say so, and I'm orf like a jug handle." He was fond of overstatement (he claimed his show was "ekalled by few and exceld by none") and clichés, either in garbled form or incongruous context. During one suspenseful winter, Artemus was asked to deliver a speech. "The fack can't be no longer disgised that a Krysis is onto us," he wrote, "and I feel it's my dooty to accept your invite for one consecutive night only."

In his works, he often ridiculed high-



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sounding language, calling it "hily manured," and "floury langwidge." It delighted him to use archaic verbs and pronouns. "I never woulde I were a bird," Artemus remarked, "but I sometimes wished I was a giraffe, on account of the long distance from his mouth to his stummuck. Hence, if he loved beer, one mugful would give him enjoyment goin' down as forty mugfuls would ordinary persons." Burlesque of the high style of life can be found in all of Charles' work.

As time went by, Brown gradually lessened his use of misspellings to the minimum necessary to show that this was the same unschooled Artemus (whose name, by the way, is said to have been borrowed from a Waterford tombstone). Unusual spellings occur just often enough to suggest the back-woodsiness of the letter writer. Compare the early *Plain Dealer* prose to this paragraph from "The Negro Question" to see the difference:

Gentz—I take my Pen in hand to inform yu in regard to my kareer Ime now in the grate Sity of tiffin (Ohio). You'd better believe the people of tiffin staired sum when i posted my beg yeller hanbills up in their town. "The Negro Question" began: I was sitting in the bar, quietly smoking a frugal pipe, when two middle-aged and stern-looking females and a young and pretty female seddently entered the room. They were accompanied by two umbrellers and a negro gentleman.

Artemus Ward letters frequently appeared in *Vanity Fair* of New York, Brown is credited with being the first to write a syndicated humor column—selling rights for simultaneous publication in two periodicals. In November, 1860, he left Cleveland for New York; and, the following January, settled down to work for *Vanity Fair*. By May he was the managing editor.

Charles was offered a large sum for a weekly letter to the *New York Ledger*, but he very wisely declined. "I needed the money badly," he said afterward, "and the offer was tempting, but I wasn't fool enough to accept it. To try to grind out an Artemus Ward column each week would have resulted in the dreariest drivel and would have ruined forever what little reputation I had made." His humor was not meant to be his trade—it had to be spontaneous, effortless and effervescent.

In 1861, Charles added the "e" to his name (Browne) out of respect for his purely British ancestry. Also in that year, in late fall, his work was collected for book publication by G.W. Carleton—the great patron of American humorists who is noted most for his failure to recognize the talent of Mark Twain. Carleton was a good publisher for Browne—he had to

arrange and edit old newspaper clippings and illegible manuscripts, and he even had to rewrite some of it. So much had to be done by Carleton, in fact, that Charles said to him one day: "The next book I write, I'm going to get you to write."

Artemus Ward: His Book—a collection of his *Plain Dealer* and *Vanity Fair* writings—was published in 1862.

Browne began experimenting with the idea of a regular show. When he had gathered enough material, he held his first lecture, as "Artemus Ward," in New London, Connecticut. It was a big success, and he immediately proceeded to give lectures all over New York, New Jersey, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire.

Of his lectures, Artemus said: "One of the features of my entertainment is, that it contains so many things that don't have anything to do with it." After one performance, this notice appeared in the *New York Times*: 'The Children in the Woods,' is a title skillfully made use of by the lecturer as a medium for saying a great many spicy and smart things on the current topics of the day. Every now and then he alludes to the title, as having no immediate reference to something that has just been spun out by him, the effect of which, aided by the droll solemnity with which it is uttered, convulses the audience with laughter. By the gift of his nature, Mr. Browne is a comedian. His delivery is provokingly deliberate, and there is a subdued humor visible in every expression on his face.

Crowds were never offended when he announced that he knew nothing about his subject. They loved being fooled. A good example of this is the second title he picked for his lectures: *60 Minutes in Africa*. Throughout the lecture, he would occasionally refer to a map of Africa at the back of the stage and make a comment such as: "Here in the center of the African continent is what is called a howling wilderness, but for my part I never heard it howl, nor met with anyone who has." Or: "It produces the red rose, the white rose, and the neg-roses." He would wind up the hour's nonsense with this dismissal to the audience and the title: "Africa is my subject. You wish me to tell you something about Africa. Africa is on the map. It's on all the maps of Africa I have ever seen. You may buy a good map of Africa for a dollar. If you study it well, you will know more about Africa than I do. It is a comprehensive subject—too vast, I assure you, for me to enter upon to-night. You would not wish me to... I feel that—I feel it deeply and I am very sensitive. If you go home and go to bed, it will be better for you than to go with me to Africa!"

"Artemus" sold out wherever he went in New York and New England. In the

The Cabinet was restless and tense; the President was reading from a chapter by Artemus Ward. The cabinetmembers were piqued at the apparent careless humor of the leader of a nation on the brink of war. Met by grim silence, Lincoln remarked: "Well, let's have another chapter." And when there was no response, he kept on reading, doggedly.

"Gentlemen," he told them, "Why don't you laugh? With the fearful strain that is upon me night and day, if I didn't laugh, I would die, and you need the medicine as much as I do." Whereupon, we are told, he reached into his tall hat, pulled out a piece of paper, and read the Emancipation Proclamation, warmed a little by the homely philosopher from Waterford, Maine.

midwest, miners loved him, as did stage-drivers, Indians, and the Mormons. On the Pacific Coast, he met two up-and-coming young writers, Mark Twain and Bret Harte.

There is very little similarity between Browne and Harte; the only area in which their work is comparable is in literary burlesque. However, Harte was interested in Browne as a lecturer, and defended his work on several occasions.

Samuel Clemens, on the other hand, owed very much to Charles Browne, the man, and Artemus Ward, the lecturer. The beginnings of Clemens' national fame came from a story Ward wanted to publish in his second book. It arrived too late for *Artemus Ward: His Travels* (1865), however, so the publisher sent it to the New York *Saturday Press*. It was immediately republished all over the country. Browne offered to Clemens the inspiration of his phenomenal success; and many of "Artemus Ward's" comic mannerisms inspired "Mark Twain" and aroused him to his possibilities.

Clemens' lectures were quite noticeably modeled after Ward's. "The rambling digression, the calculated pause, the pre-meditated afterthought, the sober expression, and the pose of worried innocence where characteristics of both," according to James Austin (*Artemus Ward*, 1964).

Two years after *Travels* came out, Artemus took his biggest step—a lecture tour of England. The step was a successful one, though. Never before was an American so loved in London.

In just a few short months, the American humorist was the idol of England. Browne wrote to his friend Jack Ryder in Cleveland: "This is the proudest moment of my life. To have been as well appreciated here as at home; to have written for the oldest comic Journal in the English language (*Punch*), received mention with Hood, with Jerrold, and Hook, and to have my picture and pseudonym as common in London as in New York, is enough for

'Yours truly, A. Ward.' When it was learned that the most delightful of men was wasting away under rapid consumption (tuberculosis), even while he was charming them, the grief was inexpressible, biographer Seitz recalls.

"The candle had burned too long at both ends." Artemus became progressively weaker and finally had to be confined to bed. He retained his sense of humor until the end. When playwright Tom Robertson, a friend present at his Southampton bedside, tried to induce Artemus to take some bitter medicine to which he greatly objected, he said, "My dear Tom, I can't take that dreadful stuff."

"Come, come" said Robertson, "Take it, my dear fellow, just for my sake. You know I would do anything for you."

"Would you?" asked Artemus faintly, grasping Tom's hand.

"I would indeed."

"Then YOU take it," the sick man said.

Consumption, "long latent in his slight physique" (Seitz) developed rapidly, and carried him off on March 6, 1867. He was brought home for burial in Elmvale Cemetery, South Waterford.

There was wide-spread mourning. The man who had made so many laugh was deeply missed. The impression, however,

didn't last. Perhaps his material was too topical. At any rate, most people today don't remember or never heard the famous story connecting Abraham Lincoln and Ward.

Although the two had never met, they admired each other. It was at a Cabinet meeting on Sept. 2, 1862, that the Waterford wit joined forces with the man of destiny.

The Cabinet was restless and tense; the President was reading from a chapter by Artemus Ward. The cabinetmembers were piqued at the apparent careless humor of the leader of a nation on the brink of war. Met by grim silence, Lincoln remarked: "Well, let's have another chapter." And when there was no response, he kept on reading, doggedly.

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Mrs. Davis, formerly of South Paris, is a preschool teacher in Los Angeles, California.



~ HOME OF ARTEMUS WARD
WATERFORD ME. ~

Ayah

STUDENTS

Thank you for again sponsoring your student writing contest. Young people oftentimes need an incentive for developing their writing skills, and the possibility of being published in your magazine provides just such an incentive.

My students at Gorham High School were delighted to find their stories in your September issue.

*Jean M. Davis
English Dept.
Gorham High School*

MEMORY PLACING

Can you place it? I sure can—that's the Oxford County Fair. Can it be twenty years ago that we spent many summers at Elm Lawn Farm in Oxford with the Roy Lundgren's?

Our daughter discovered your magazine and sent us a subscription which we certainly enjoy. It brings back memories of rock collecting, fishing in Thompson Lake and Whitney Pond where my husband caught the prize-winning bass one summer—8 lbs. 6 oz. I had to net it—but it didn't fit so it came in eventually, exhausted, across the top—Had it gotten away I wouldn't be alive to tell the tale.

Sorry to hear the magazine is having troubles as we look forward to each issue.

*Barbara H. Ewing
Upper Montclair, New Jersey*

AUNT ADA'S LIBERATION

Usually she didn't find it a nuisance not being able to read. After all, she cooked anything from blackberry cobbler to possum stew by feel and since she had more spunk than Uncle Bye every waking moment was taken chopping cotton, milking herefords, herding hogs up from the bottoms.

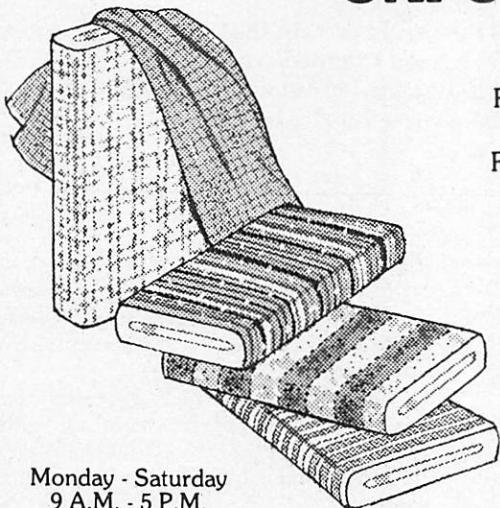
Come voting time though, it WAS inconvenient to have to ask Bye to mark her ballot — that is until she discovered he had x'd her vote for Roosevelt that darned old coot who killed pigs while people in Yellow Creek went hungry.

From that day on, daughter Polly marked her vote.

And for the next thirty years, Aunt Ada loved, honored, cherished Uncle Bye And killed his vote.

*Myra McLarey
Norway
and Australia*

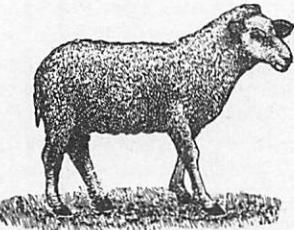
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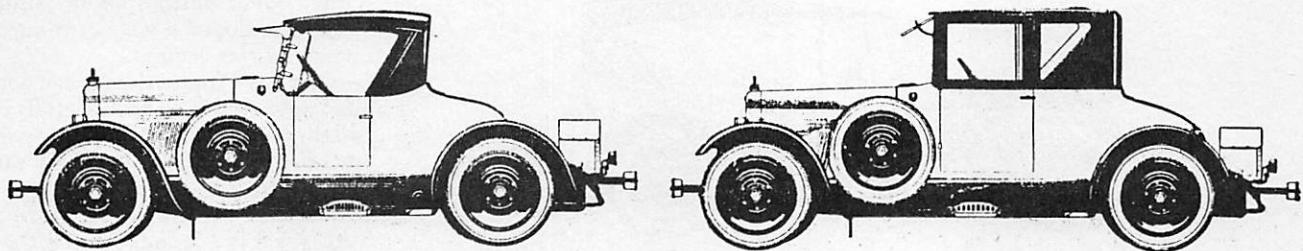
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THE HORSELESS CARRIAGE? IMPRACTICAL! It will never amount to much!

by Raymond Cotton

Early in our twentieth century, the horse began its trend toward becoming an endangered species. However, at the time of my first train trip to Portland, horses were still very much in evidence. As we came out of Union Station, the cabbies greeted us with loud cries of "Cab! Taxi uptown!"

Knowing that carriage travel would be old stuff for my mother and me, Father took us uptown on the electric cars with their clanging bells and whining motors. It was in Monument Square that I first heard the unaccustomed sound of metal-shod feet striking hard stone pavement. Low-hung drays were toiling up the cobble streets from the waterfront, bringing merchandise to the stores on Congress, Free, Middle, and Federal Streets.

We took our noonday meal at Mitchell's Oyster House in Monument Square. As we were eating, there came a wild clanging of bells outside and someone said, "Fire alarm!"

Soon we saw the first engine go dashing by, drawn by two great dappled gray horses surging valiantly against their collars, the uniformed driver erect in his seat guiding with reins held taut.

Behind him the boiler of the engine belched smoke and flame. Next came the hook and ladder truck, drawn by two shining blacks. Two high-stepping chestnuts brought up the rear, pulling a chemical rig bearing several very alert firemen. Years later, I was told that their duty was to put out any awning or other fires set by sparks spewed out by the lead engine!

Yes, from Monument Square to Longfellow Square, the horse was still supreme, but toward the West End from Pine Street to Western Promenade, in the realm of the brick mansions, the horse was fast being replaced by horseless vehicles:

The Simplex, The Stanley, The Maxwell, and The Oldsmobile.

Nothing so pretentious had yet happened in Hiram. However, one day two adventurous souls piloting a Stanley Steamer braved the mud holes and sand ruts on the tortuous road from Portland and spent the night in Hiram in the Mt. Cutler House. Their impact on the populace could have been little less than that of a rocket launching on a present-day crowd. It was a tremendous first that drew people from as far away as Denmark and Brownfield.

The motive of the two pioneering tourists was commercial. They offered horseless carriage rides for a price!

It was a washout. Some people balked at the price. Many just didn't have the guts to trust themselves in the tarnation thing!

The next year, around 1909, our local physician Dr. Charles Wilson, blossomed out with a bright red Maxwell roadster. Then John Clemons, the rural free delivery man, acquired a pearl gray Brush. Matthew Stanton followed with a Stanley Steamer. From Sebago, Henry Weed drove weekly into town with a true horseless carriage, complete with dashboard and whip socket. The auto was coming in and the horse was going out.

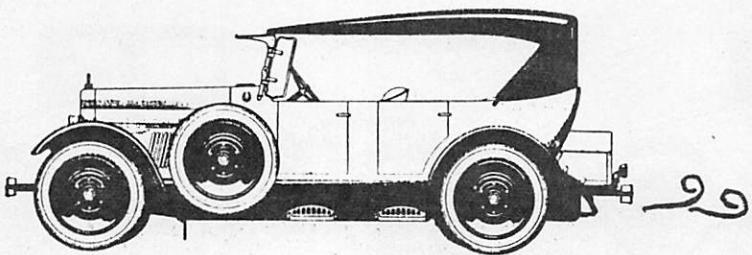
At an early age, I developed an aversion to horses. The animals around Grampa's mill were old crowbaits, cheap in price and thus expendable. One was subject to frequent fits. One was a chronic runaway. One was a "nipper." One day I toddled in too close and he nipped me in the shoulder and picked me up off my feet. Fortunately, he grasped only my gray woolen jacket and not my pink tender hide. I did enjoy the beasts though—from a distance. It was fun to watch the local lads from

time to time race their horses across the "Flat" with a small wager at stake; the winner being the first one to reach and enter the covered bridge. Because of the narrowness of that edifice, two teams entering side by side in a tie and confronted by a team approaching from the opposite direction were likely to produce extreme confusion. Once it produced a near-tragedy. As a result, the Selectmen put up a sign reading: FIVE DOLLARS FINE FOR CROSSING BRIDGE FASTER THAN A WALK.

Another horse-related item of considerable interest to some of the younger generation was the horse ball. It was formed by selecting one of the ever-present fresh horse droppings (as yet untouched by the English sparrows) and sanitizing it by rolling it in the sand with the toe. This produced a missile which could be hurled at some unsuspecting passerby. As they were very prone to burst on contact, with messy results, it was advisable to take off at top speed immediately after the launching.

One sultry afternoon, I was listening to my fourth grade teacher declaiming on some long-forgotten subject when a knock came at the door. It was my mother! Miss Clemons, the teacher, conversed briefly with her, then turned and said, "Raymond, you may be excused." Following Mother outside, I was nearly overcome by what I saw. There was Uncle Doctor Lombard from South Portland with a new two-cylinder Cadillac, bright red with polished brass head lights, but minus doors or running boards.

Uncle was wearing the usual uniform of the early motorist: linen duster, long black gauntlets, and close-fitting goggles. Beside him, Aunt Laura sported above her linen duster a tremendous flowered



hat, secured against the wind by a voluminous veil draped over it and secured beneath her chin. They looked just like the picture on the calendar in our kitchen!

Uncle put something he called the crank into a hole in the side of the vehicle while the ladies settled themselves in the back seat. I was accorded the seat of honor beside the driver. Uncle pulled up sharply on the crank and the motor beneath the front seat awoke with a gentle chug-chug-a-chug. The moving of a few mysterious levers and we were off on the three-mile journey to Gram Lombard's house.

I had never travelled so fast (perhaps twenty miles per hour), and with no windshield or goggles the effect was highly exciting.

The last few yards to Gram's house were up a steep grade. The heavily-loaded car tried it and coughed and quit. Uncle cranked her up and opened up something he called the cut-out.

The motor responded with a series of sharp barks which alerted Gram and Grampa to come down and see what was going on.

We all got behind the back and pushed, and to the accompaniment of loud bangs and a puff of smoke, we arrived at the house.

On the way back home, an event occurred which not only made my day perfect, but also sold me forever on the value of the horseless carriage.

On the "Flat" between Hiram and East Hiram, we overtook one of the loudest proponents of the superiority of the horse over the automobile. He pulled up his reins and flourished his whip in a challenge to a race to the bridge. Uncle Loring said, "Hang on tight" and pulled the little lever under the steering wheel way down. As we slowed down for the bridge, I could see Jimmy way behind, "eating our dust."

The next day I found myself a hero of the hour—like Columbus returning from his first voyage. I was asked many questions by my less-privileged companions. And I blushingly admit that I gave them a lurid account of my adventure that should have increased the length of my nose by several inches.

In 1917 my father and Uncle Milan pooled their resources and bought an Oldsmobile, a seven-passenger one equipped with jump seats in the middle and a cooling fan that made a loud and exciting screaming sound at any speed over thirty-five miles per hour. That soothed my envy of my many playmates whose parents had traded in their horses for Model T Fords.

I soon developed an over-powering hunger to drive. On the rides we took, I watched my elders at every movement. I read the instruction manual cover to cover several times. I acquired a pressure gauge and carefully checked the tires. Uncle Milan vetoed this. He said I was

wasting air! He also harbored several other queer notions about automobiles, and I developed a very cautious attitude when he was around.

One day I found the garage doors open and not a soul in sight. Carefully checking all the adjustments, I stepped on the starter button. The big V8 motor came obediently to life.

Depress the clutch pedal. Move gear shift lever to left and forward. Release the clutch gently and at the same time advance the throttle. I knew it all by heart. It worked! Still following instructions to the letter, I eased the car back into the garage. Congratulating myself on getting away with it, I decided to repeat the stunt from time to time, which I did.

Uncle Milan was a member of the School Board. As the fall term approached, he decided to visit some of the teachers to discuss this and that. He invited me to go along. In all innocence, I agreed. When we reached a smooth and straight section of the road he brought the car to a halt. His voice was like the ominous rumble of distant thunder. "Here, young man, let's see how you drive." Then he added, "You don't have to back up. I know you can do that." I hadn't fooled him for a second!

With clenched teeth and rigid posture, I took the wheel and performed the prescribed operations. I had never driven a distance of over twenty feet before, but surprisingly, everything went smoothly. We approached a house on the right. "Pull her over," Uncle ordered. I found myself parked before the home of one of my more belligerent teachers. All the kids held her in great awe; that included me, and I nearly shuddered as she came rushing out to us. I jumped out. Should I run? What had I done now? Too late. Trapped. One firm hand fell on my shoulder, the other hand grasped mine. She actually smiled as she congratulated me on my performance behind the wheel!

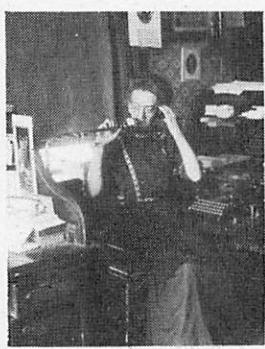
I now know how Lindberg must have felt when he landed in Paris, France!

Cotton is a storekeeper and writer in Hiram.

PURDAH

The young fir trees,
Like the women of Peshawar,
Don white burkas
After the first snowfall
Of late November.

Jack Barnes
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You Don't Say

A Deliberate Worker

Once while I was patiently waiting for work on my auto to be finished in a Bridgton garage, I heard the mechanic state: "You may think that I am slow, but I'm not. I'm deliberate."

Specific Information

In a South Paris garage, I was arranging to have the tail pipe on my truck lengthened. "How long a piece should be added?" I inquired.

"Wal," the mechanic thoughtfully opined, "It ought to stick out fur enough without botherin' any."

Thumb Paid For

A man, probably an out-of-stater, ran a pub in Maine's early days. Every time he drew a drink, he kept his thumb in the mug, thus giving short measure. Finally, one day, a big woodsman seized the mug, thumb and all, at the same time drawing a hunting knife.

"What are you trying to do?" asked the shivering innkeeper.

"I've paid for that thumb several times over," the woodsman answered, "and now I'm going to keep it."

Dubious Pigs

A man was asked if a neighboring farmer was a liar. "No," was the answer, "I couldn't rightly say that he is. But I can say that when it comes time to feed his pigs, he has to get someone else to call them."

William Tacey
Waterford



The radiator leaks a bit,
The front wheels don't quite line.
Its glossy paint is marred and dull
Its chrome has lost its shine.

The rubber's thin, the motor knocks,
She's a little out of time.
The windshield is cracked, the fenders bent,
The rear end howls and whines.

But still I'm proud of my old bus,
I think she's mighty fine
'Cause the last installment due is paid
and now she's MINE, ALL MINE.

Ray Cotton
Hiram

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Family Memories

THE TRAVELS OF TWELVE LITTLE SILVER TEASPOONS

There was a children's book that came into being at about the time the Twelve Little Teaspoons did—*The Ten Little Peppers And How They Grew*. Well, the little teaspoons didn't exactly grow, but they had an interesting history. In fact, they had some accidents which left some of them not quite as big as they once were, and one was irretrievably lost.

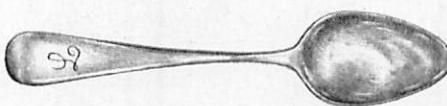
In the beginning, about 100 years ago (February 6, 1886, to be exact), they were done up in a nice little box by some ladies and given as a wedding present to Alma Adelaide Lovering who lived in Stoneham, Massachusetts.

Alma hadn't always lived in Stoneham, but came there about ten years earlier to work in a shoe shop in the town. Many young women made their living in that manner in 1886. She had been a country girl and her mother had died about eight years earlier in Greenwood, Maine. Her father remarried and moved the family to West Auburn. Her brother, Lewis Hutchinson Lovering, twelve years older, had already come to Stoneham to work as a carpenter (later to have a building contracting business and become the Mayor of the City of Medford for a short time). An older sister, Sabra Rawson, had also come to Stoneham. Probably this city proved attractive to them, as a sister of their father, Prescott Lovering, lived there: Aunt Hannah Hill.

The story is that Lewis went to West Auburn to bring his 16-year-old sister to Massachusetts and Aunt Hannah suggested a suitable place for her to live, with a motherly woman familiarly known as Marm King. Her real name may have been Annie and she lived not far from the square to the corner of Hancock and Warren Streets.

Alma was a high spirited young girl. There are no stories of those ten years between 1876 and 1886, but through her cousin Ada Dunn she met a young man by the name of Frank A. Oxnard, from Norway, the town next to where she had been born in Maine. They decided to marry and set up housekeeping in nearby West Medford. The teaspoons were given to her by her fellow workers in the shoe shop.

They were nice little thin spoons marked Sterling and manufactured by Baldwin, of a conservative and enduring pattern later called Old English Antique. They were engraved with an *L*, the initial of her last name. And they probably were used every day for every meal so that in time they acquired a nice patina. All went well with them for over twenty years. They even survived a move to her husband's old home on a farm back in Norway in 1907.



But, during their short stay there, one of them disappeared. That left eleven. No special note was made of this happening. Also while they lived in Norway, their son Charles left to go to Bowdoin College. When his college years were over, the family was back in their home in West Medford and Charles was in search of work.

He tried working at two or three firms in Boston and this necessitated a trip morning and night to and from the city five miles away by way of trolley car and Elevated and Subway transportation. Each day his mother packed a lunch for him and she provided a spoon. Why one of the silver spoons was thus used is unknown, but finally a day came when the lunch box was left on the trolley car. Then there were ten. And ten they remained as long as Alma lived—until 1933.

By this time her daughter, Nancy Pearl, was married and living in—guess where?—Norway, Maine. Her father's half-sister lived near her, also many cousins. At the time of her mother's death, she went to West Medford and stayed three weeks, during that time sorting over her mother's possessions and choosing some to take home with her. Among those things chosen were the ten teaspoons. They were a keepsake of the old and familiar. But, to her surprise, she found that she had, before her marriage, chosen as her silver pattern Old English Antique—the very one she had used all her life!

Well, she used them every day. All went well until the electric disposal came into

use for chewing up garbage and washing it down the drain. Those thin little spoons got caught more than once, as they were so light they were flushed down with the water and all of a sudden a disquieting sound would disclose the unpleasant fact that they were being damaged. Two or three times one of them would go to Gebelein's in Boston for restoration, and sometimes not quite enough silver was left to exactly restore them. The last time this happened, the clerk looked up and said, "Down the drain?" Since then they have stayed in the drawer and stainless steel ones have been used daily—especially as her son, Charles, remarked one day that they were too good to be used all the time!

In this interval, one other strange reappearance of one of them proved a puzzle. How long it was before the spoon came to light—in, of all places, the vegetable garden!—no one knows. How it got there is a conjecture. Possibly a child took it there to dig with. This all sounds as though someone was quite careless. The spoon's existence was given up reluctantly but, one spring planting day, the trowel unearthed an object faintly familiar. At first it was tossed to one side; then, as it seemed to merit further consideration, it was picked up, wiped off and behold! It was a much twisted little silver teaspoon. So, once more, there were ten.

After that, during one of the visits home of Charles Oxnard and his wife Lillian, there was another surprise. Charles and Lillian always made it a point to visit Hattie Oxnard Brown, whose property backed up that of his sister, Nancy. There was always much going back and forth between the two houses. One day upon return from a call, Lillian mentioned that she had seen a spoon at Hattie's that looked just like the ten that came from West Medford. To make a long story short, it was one of the original twelve, the first one to be lost when the family moved to the farm for the short period when Charles left for Bowdoin.

The farm had been sold in 1907 by Frank to a man named Carroll Delano who lived a comparatively short time. His widow married Milan Bennett, caretaker for the estate of C. A. Stephens of *Youth's Companion* fame, and they continued to

live there for the next fifty years or so. One day Kate, his wife, discovered the spoon in the grass at the back of the house where a drain from a wooden sink had emptied out; it would appear the spoon had been washed in that sink and had gone out onto the ground with the dishwater; such emptyings were permitted when that old house dating from early 1800's was built. It was, of course, marked L and meant little to Kate, but belatedly she took it to Hattie who had lived on the old farm as a child with Frank. They thought the L might stand for Lunt, Frank's mother's maiden name. Instead, it stood for Lovering, Frank's wife's name.

So spoon number 11 rejoined its mates. Of course, there was no way to once more possess the twelfth spoon. Instead, the silversmith Gebelein in Boston was asked to furnish an old spoon of its style and vintage and to engrave L on it. Once again there are twelve little silver teaspoons.

Nancy O. Longley
Norway

MAKING MEMORIES

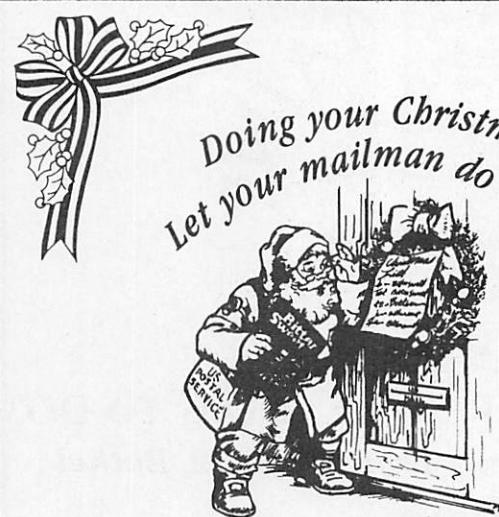
"How would you like to go on a picnic?" I asked my two little granddaughters, Jody, not-quite four, and Heidi, two. Their eyes shone with delight as they chorused, "Oh, yes, Grammie, let's do it!"

The skies were threatening rain, so my husband said we had better go cover up the hay baler we had been using in a neighbor's field. We have a big flat-bed trailer that we haul hay on. He hitched it to the tractor, put an old car seat on front for us to ride on, and armed with a jug of water and some cake, we rode up to the field. Suddenly it started to rain. I pulled in a big piece of plastic up over us and we ate cake and drank water in our "tent."

When my daughter-in-law came after the girls a little while later, they didn't want to go with her. She told my son his folks must be crazy to go on a picnic in the rain. But this year when they turned to me and teased, "Grammie, can we have another picnic?" I knew that we had made a memory for them.

I think memories are made when we give some of ourselves and our time to our children. Now-a-days the world is so hectic that parents spend too little time with their young ones. Lots of children never know their grandparents—and this is too bad because grandparents have so much to give.

Children remember the unusual or things that affect their emotions. They remember times when they are especially happy, sad, or humiliated.



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Adults need to make memories, too. The things you will remember the longest aren't the planned parties but the spur-of-the-moment times that almost always turn out to be the most fun. Something out of the ordinary—it needn't be expensive—is what gives you the most pleasure to think about later!

Walking up a deserted woods road holding my husband's hand and watching an autumn sunset. The trees and sky were so beautiful; we shared a feeling of closeness that we'll never forget.

Going deer-hunting with my son and walking farther than we planned. Remembering him helping me pull up the last mountain—laughing at the antics of one another—and hearing some deer crashing off at our laughter.

How proud my boys were when I had shot a deer and they'd come to help me drag it in. They'd pace off the distance and brag about my "long shot."

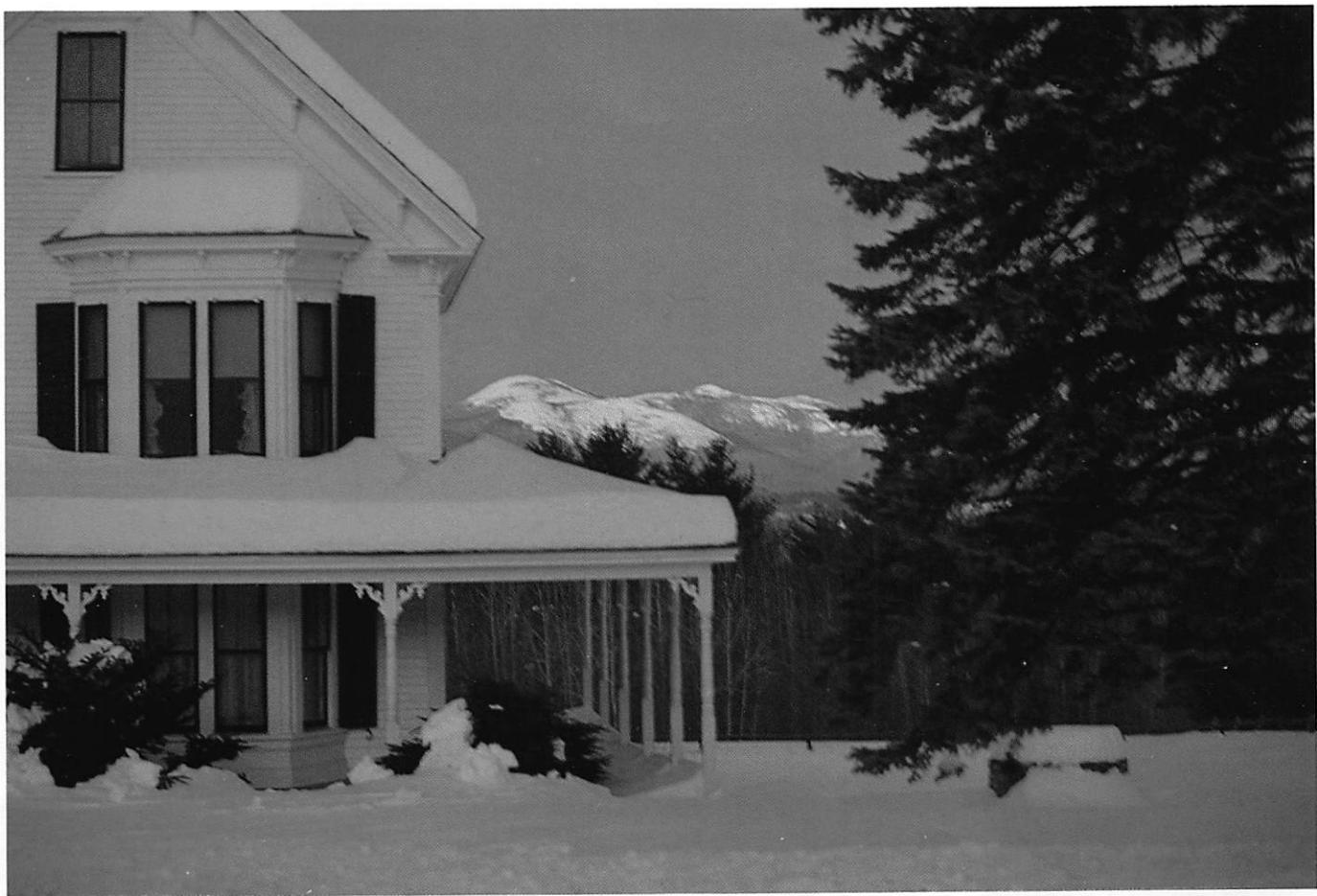
Abused children usually grow up to be abusive parents. It's what they remember about being young—they are conditioned to believe that is the way to do it.

I used to tell my boys when they were teenagers that I didn't care what they did when they went out in the evening as long as they didn't hurt any living thing or any person's property. Years later I was amazed to hear my boy say the same thing to his teenaged sons. It started me thinking how important what we say to our children really is.

We were so busy on our farm trying to earn a living we didn't take enough time off for fun. I regret that . . . and I'd advise anyone to make time for fun, especially the spur-of-the-moment picnics, trips, parties, or whatever. They cost little and leave a treasure of memories.

Most parents rush out and buy Christmas gifts for their children that they really can't afford. They don't realize that their children would remember an evening spent making cookies for Santa (and let them decorate the cookies) far longer than any store-bought toy. Helping Dad make popcorn balls, finding a farm where you can go cut your own tree and let the children go with you and help pick it out—all little things like this add up to a happy childhood.

My husband used to take an old set of sleighbells on Christmas Eve when the boys were in bed, and go up into the attic to stamp around, ring the bells, and yell, "Whoa, Dancer," etc. in a loud, gruff voice. The boys really knew it was their



The Bald Faces — Photo by Juanita Perkins

dad, yet they got such a kick out of it that the year our oldest boy was married and came home for Christmas, he called to his dad, "Please go ring the bells, Dad. I can't go to sleep until you do!"

There is no child that won't grow to be a better person if his folks make him feel he is needed and wanted. We were lucky we lived on a farm and our boys had chores to do. But even if you have to invent them give your children specific jobs that only they can do. Make them feel important, reward them with a little of your time—hunting, fishing, or whatever (if you live in the country); trips to parks, zoos, libraries (if you live in the city). Do things together—that's when memories are made. You may be amazed at how much your child has to give.

Grandparents who live close to their children can be a source of memories and joy for them. Usually, they have more time than parents and understand children better. Sometimes older friends and neighbors can substitute for grandparents if none are available.

Just to have someone to listen to him can be very important to a child of any age. How many times have you brushed off a child with a brusque, "I'll think about it; we'll talk about it later"? Stop and think. Unless there is an emergency, when they ask is the time to listen . . . not later. It may make the difference between right and wrong in your child's future. They may be crying for help in the only way they know. Don't turn them down.

Too many parents make unpleasant memories for their children. The father who says, "I don't want to catch you drinking" while pouring one for himself; the mother who "doesn't want to catch her children smoking" while puffing on a cigarette—they are the bad examples.

Busy children with chores to do, a part-time job, parents interested in their school activities, are least likely to have drug problems. Bored, neglected children get into trouble for lack of something to do.

Stop for a minute and think about what you remember best of your childhood. I'll bet you remember the times you enjoyed

something with one of your parents or friends, or else it's something that hurt your feelings—a deep disappointment or tragedy, a humiliation or embarrassment. Day-in, day-out experiences are soon forgotten.

For more than fifty years I have remembered how I felt when I was promoted to fourth grade. I skipped third grade and went from second to fourth. I remember how proud I was when the teacher asked me to get up and read aloud to the History Class. I started to read: "Christ-Hopper Columbus discovered America" was as far I got. The children roared. And I have never forgotten my humiliation as I sank into my seat and covered my face.

It's not too late to start making memories that will let your son or daughter say to his child, "When I was little, I remember the time Mama and Dad and I . . ."

*Lucretia Douglas
West Baldwin
Page 20 . . .*



Are you one of the millions of skiers or summer tourists who have enjoyed a breath-taking ride on one of the ski lifts ascending Wildcat Mountain? Opposite Mount Washington, Wildcat is the queen of the Presidential chain and the highest point east of the Mississippi.

If so, did you ride as most of us do, white knuckles firmly gripping the rail, as your eyes swept in the awesome power of the surrounding mountains? The lift took you in gentle bumps and quietly humming to the peak, where the majestic panorama opened below you: a full view, where miles seem like inches and cars are little more than colorful pin-heads on the roadways far below; where wisps of steam from the paper mill fifteen or twenty miles up the road in Berlin look close enough to touch.

Have you ever wondered how the lift that got you, shaky-legged but awe-struck, to the summit, got there itself? Even from the comfort of your gondola, you can appreciate the steepness of the rocky slope below, and know it would be no easy feat just to walk up, carrying yourself and nothing else, let alone the tons of steel from which you ride suspended.

The truth is, the building of a ski lift on

the side of a mountain is a task of back-breaking dimension—an immensely complicated technical accomplishment. One must stand back and behold, somewhat breathlessly, the old lifts, installed by the old-timers, piece by piece, bolt by bolt, after having been carried up the mountain on foot (or at least partly so). They still work, these old lifts! They hum as softly as John Cameron Swayzie's Timex, and have carried thousands, maybe millions of skiers safely to the top—and even to the bottom again, for those of us who dared not let go.

Alas, technology has caught up. While the age of the computer has vastly reduced the complexities of alignment, gear ratios, and the mechanical contrivances that make the lift go, the helicopter has taken over a large portion of the back-breaking chore of lifting the components into place.

Wheeled or tracked cranes have not been totally displaced; but these require roads of some sort and nerveless operators, willing to work while balanced precariously close to the edge of nothingness.

One of the chief ingredients required in the building of a lift is concrete. In the good old days it too was carried, bag by bag up the mountainside, then mixed by

the shovel-full to make bases for the towers which hold the lift. Today, specially-trained drivers take concrete pre-mixed to the proper consistency up muddy, slippery mountain roads, or helicopters air-lift and pour the concrete directly from flying buckets into the forms.

The real advantage of the helicopter comes when the towers, which weigh nearly three-and-a-half tons, can be lifted, already assembled, up the mountain and bolted into place on the concrete pads.

The towers are assembled in the field, where every bolt can be checked. Each of these towers must lean a given amount, to compensate for variations in the slope of the mountain—in one case 22 degrees from upright. Riggers must place a special harness in which the towers are built at just the right angle, so that when the pilot lifts off, the tower dangles at exactly the proper angle. (At 3½ tons, if the tower didn't drop over the pad precisely the way the bolts were set, there was no chance of turning it to compensate.)

From the summit, high above the field where the towers were being rigged, we waited (it seemed like hours) for the first tower to arrive. The ground crew prepared the site, clearing a small area to work around the concrete base—4 ft. by 4 ft. by 8 ft. deep—while the ground contact for the helicopter checked his radio.

Then a far-off buzzing indicated lift-off. It was a chilling sight to watch a tiny yellow and white dot materialize deep in the canyon opposite Mount Washington, then grow and loom ever larger until it was overhead, the slap-slap whirring of the rotors spraying dust and pieces of straw from the concrete bases around our ears and into our eyes.

Slowly, gently, the helicopter crew fought the buffeting wind currents and the tremendous drag of the unwieldy load as the tower inched nearer the base. An excited cry was quickly muffled by the slapping rotor. One bolt was secured, then another. When four were made fast, the helicopter lifted off to bring another tower while the eight bolts were tightened permanently.



Ski Lifting

by Jim Keil

The tension showed in the faces of the helicopter pilots as they jockeyed for position on the mountainside, less than a mile from the place where the highest wind speed on earth was recorded. Keep in mind that only one inch in the raising or lowering of the helicopter represents a lot of movement to the people working below, beneath 3½ tons of steel suspended by a thin cable on the side of an unpredictable mountain.

But, in spite of the obstacles, the new triple chair lift is now in place and operational, and the Carson helicopter, has moved on to bigger and better things. I saw it in a magazine commercial for beer the other day.

I came away from the experience with an increased appreciation for the whole business of getting to the top of the mountain, and I can't help but wonder what the pioneers of the ski industry—the old-timers who labored the first lifts into place—would think of the fact that, the day I was there, this crew averaged a little better than five minutes to set each tower in place!

Mr. Keil, salesman, store owner, writer and photographer, lives in Naples, Maine.



Life on a Maine Farm in the Early 1920's

My husband Harold and I came to the Rich farm in Bethel during the month of June in 1921 to live with his parents for an extended visit.

We brought our nine-month-old son Stuart and proudly presented him to his grandparents who eagerly welcomed their only grandchild. They each held him for a while with such a happy look on their faces! When the baby began to fuss a little, I gave him his bottle and carried him upstairs to a crib already prepared for him.

For Harold, living on a farm was an old experience, for he had grown up on this one, but for me, brought up in a town, everything was all so different. I missed the running water and electricity that I was used to, but after awhile the lack of them didn't seem to matter so much as long as the baby was so healthy and happy.

A few Sundays after our arrival in Bethel, Stuart was baptized by the Rev. William Curtis at the Congregational Church. Mr. Curtis was a fine elderly gentleman, and a close friend of the Rich family, so it seemed fitting that he should perform this sacrament.

Harold and I were naturally very proud of our little son, as were his grandparents, sitting in the congregation. A friend had placed a bowl of white roses near the baptismal font, which I thought added a nice touch.

Mr. Curtis was sometimes a dinner guest in the Rich home, and he entertained us with stories of his long career. He had a keen sense of humor as was evidenced by this anecdote that was told to me. As he was sitting at the table with the family one day, there was suddenly a loud popping followed by several more explosions, coming from down cellar. (That was where Father Rich kept his home-made hop beer.) There was an embarrassed silence for half a minute, then a loud outburst of laughter in which Mr. Curtis joined heartily. (Lest there are doubts about my father-in-law's character, I can say truthfully that he was a temperate man, and drank his beer only during the hot summer months as he worked around the farm.)

The farm was located on Paradise Hill, two miles from the village, but we had friends and relatives living nearby. Lulu Eames, my mother-in-law's sister, and her family lived across the road, and the Tilson Burke's had their farm a short distance down the hill.

We had a telephone, a hand-cranked affair fastened to the dining-room wall, and we received the *Boston Globe* in the daily mail, so we kept in touch with the outside world. Radio and television had not been introduced, but what we didn't know about, we didn't miss. Neither my husband nor his father owned a car, so we had to depend on a horse and buggy for transportation to the village. Wood was our fuel for heating and cooking, and since there was plenty of that on the farm and men in the family to prepare it for us, we had no worries in that area. Or fuel bills!

When we arrived in mid-June, the vegetable garden hadn't started to produce, but there were plenty of dandelion greens to be had for the digging. Cooked with salt pork they were very tasty—and full of vitamins. Soon we were having lettuce and radishes with our meals, followed by beet and turnip greens. Later there were so many vegetables, we could hardly keep up with them.

It was every Maine gardener's ambition to have peas for the fourth of July, and they were often on the Rich table on that date. Sweet corn was always eagerly awaited, and that was ready by the middle of August. It seems as though we could never get our fill of it!

Besides the vegetables, the farm provided milk and eggs, chicken and pork, so there was plenty of protein for all.

During August there were plenty of cultivated blackberries to eat fresh, and to bake into pies, with enough left over for canning. Early apples made delicious sauce and in the fall there were pears to eat and to can. The Concord grapes were a bit too sour to eat from the vines, but just right for making fine jelly. Oh, the farm was a bountiful place, indeed!

Besides being a bountiful place, it was a beautiful one with its spacious lawns, trees and flowers. Pink, white and red roses bloomed in July, while sweet peas, foxgloves and pansies added their beauty. The dahlias and gladioli were large and gorgeous. All these flowers Mother Rich grew and tended with "tender, loving care."

Sometimes Harold took me on hiking and camping trips in the White Mountains. I had never done any real mountain climbing before, but my husband was a skilful teacher, and I, an eager learner, so I made good progress. When we went on these trips we left Stuart in the care of his devoted grandparents and I doubt if he missed us a bit.

By the first of October the foliage was turning, and all around us were the red

and gold leaves of maples and the yellows of birches and poplars. Behind the barn we could see Peter Graves Mountain with its brilliant trees mixed with the dark green of spruces and firs. It was a truly beautiful sight.

In the meantime, Harold and his father were harvesting the crops. First, the apples, which included Russets, Baldwins and Northern Spies, were picked and put in our dirt cellar. Then the root vegetables and cabbages, pumpkins and squashes were also stored in the cellar. The oats and corn that had been raised for the poultry and livestock were harvested and stored in the barn. Finally, the potatoes were dug, and they included Early Rose and Green Mountain varieties. There were about a dozen bushels in all, and they were spread on the barn floor to dry before being put in sacks for storage in the cellar. With that accomplished, the harvesting was done. It was a highly satisfying sight to see all the vegetables lining the cellar walls, and the cupboard full of canned fruit, pickles and jelly.

Now we were looking forward to Thanksgiving and planning the feast for the day. It was a very special holiday, as it was Stuart's first one at the farm. While we ate the bountiful meal, Stuart sat in his highchair happily gnawing on a drumstick. Dessert was the traditional one of pies—pumpkin and mince, though we were all too full by that time to do them justice. We all agreed that it had been an especially happy holiday.

Early in December we had our first big snowstorm which, of course, necessitated a lot of shovelling by the men. Now, trips to the village were made in a sleigh which Stuart thought was great fun. His grandfather fixed up a sled with a box nailed to the top, in which, bundled up well, he loved to be drawn around the yard. Hal had some skis, but the only skiing I did was to stand on the back of his, while he skied down a gentle slope. But it was fun for me, anyway. We both liked to travel over the fields on snowshoes, and once we snowshoed to the village and back. I thought this was quite an accomplishment!

Early morning temperatures often went down to zero, and we were kept busy stoking the fires. The men filled the woodbox to overflowing and brought in big chunks of wood for the dining-room fireplace.

One day my mother-in-law and I heard an ominous roaring which came from there, and our worst fears were confirmed when we went outdoors and saw flames issuing from the chimney. There

Homemade

NIFTY NIBBLES FOR HOLIDAY SNACKING

by Beatrice H. Comas

"Fingers were made before forks, and hands before knives," said Jonathan Swift. Serving foods that can be eaten with the fingers makes it easier for host and guest alike and creates a rapport between the food and the "snacker" that makes man-made forks unnecessary.

Perhaps we shouldn't judge hospitality by the quality and/or quantity of the food offered but none can deny that during the holidays we expect nibbles that are special. Peanuts, pretzels, and onion dip may suffice on other occasions but Christmas "entertainings" seem to call for at least a few succulent, savory tid-bits.

Hors d'oeuvres should have a certain balance: bland, spicy; crisp, soft; some hot, some cold; some pale, some colorful. Choose from these food categories: fish, eggs, cheese, meat, poultry, vegetables, bread, and crisp nibbles such as nuts, pretzels, popcorn and chips.

A Lazy Susan is one of the ideal ways to offer a maximum variety of finger foods in a minimum of space and is particularly suited for small, informal gatherings. Guests can serve themselves.

If possible, serve the cold, crunchy foods on a bed of ice, or hold them in the refrigerator until just ready to serve.

Serve hot tid-bits in a chafing dish or on a hot tray...or bring them out a few at a time on warm platters.

Here are recipes for some of the hors d'oeuvre possibilities from which a gracious host or hostess might choose.

Cheesy Mushroom Appetizer Puffs

1 3-ounce package cream cheese, softened
1 2-ounce can mushrooms, drained and chopped
2 tablespoons chopped pimiento
1 tablespoon chopped onion (or 1 teaspoon instant minced onion)
2 drops hot pepper sauce
1 8-ounce can refrigerated crescent dinner rolls
1/3 cup finely chopped nuts

Preheat oven to 375°. In small bowl, blend first 5 ingredients. Separate crescent dough into 4 rectangles. Press perforations to seal. Spread each with about 1 tablespoon mushroom mixture. Starting at longer side, roll up, seal, and cut each

into 6 pieces. Roll in nuts. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet 15 to 20 minutes until golden brown. Serve warm. Makes 24 puffs. Leftovers may be refrigerated.

Steak Tartare

2 pounds ground round
1/2 cup finely chopped onion
1/2 cup capers, drained
8 anchovy fillets, finely chopped
4 egg yolks
Salt to taste
1/8 teaspoon pepper
Parsley sprigs (garnish)
Thin slices of onion (garnish)

In a large bowl, using 2 forks, lightly toss all ingredients except garnish, until well combined. Shape into a mound on a serving platter. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to serve (2 to 3 hours). When ready to serve, surround steak tartare with parsley sprigs and raw onion rings. Serve with thin slices of rye or pumpernickel bread. Serves 20.

Stuffed Pasta Shells

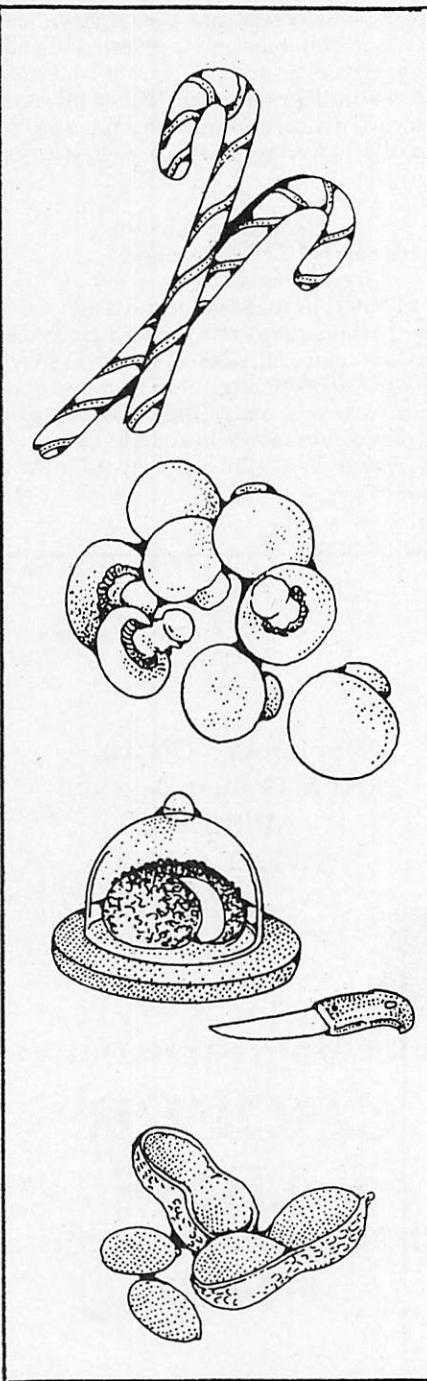
Large pasta shells
Shrimp paste, anchovy and chopped egg paste, or black or red caviar

Cook pasta shells according to package directions. Cool and dry them. Fill with shrimp paste, anchovy and chopped egg paste, or black or red caviar.

10 Minute Curried Chicken Liver Pate

1/2 pound chicken livers
1/4 cup butter or margarine
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup chopped apple
1/4 teaspoon salt (or to taste)
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 egg
2 tablespoons soft butter or margarine

Halve chicken livers. Sauté in large skillet with the 1/4 cup butter and onion, apple, salt, pepper, curry, for 5 minutes. Break an egg into pan. Stir just until egg is set. Turn contents of pan into blender or food processor and whirl until smooth. Blend in the 2 tablespoons soft butter. Pour into small serving bowl. Chill overnight.



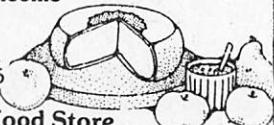
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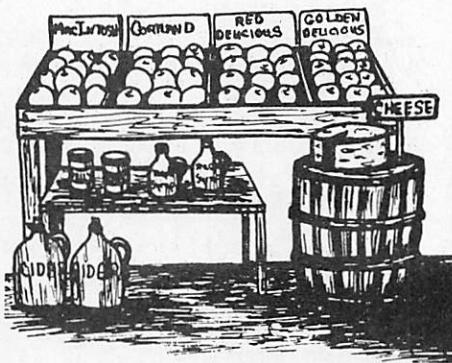


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Chili Olive Dip for Raw Vegetables

1/4 cup mayonnaise
1 4-ounce can peeled green chilies
1/2 cup drained pimento-stuffed olives
1 cup dairy sour cream
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon chili powder (or more to taste)

Place mayonnaise, chilies, and olives in container of electric blender. Cover and whirl on medium speed until smooth. Spoon sour cream into a small bowl and stir in mayonnaise mixture, salt and chili powder. Cover and refrigerate 1 hour or longer until serving time. Makes 1 1/4 cups. Serve with corn chips, zucchini spears, cauliflower florets, carrot sticks, or celery sticks.

Barbecued Peanuts

3 cups salted blanched peanuts
1/4 cup barbecue sauce

In bowl stir together peanuts and sauce until peanuts are evenly coated. Spread in shallow pan and bake in a 300°F. oven, stirring occasionally, 10 to 15 minutes or until dry and separated. Cool in pan. Makes 3 cups. Store in airtight container or plastic bag. Will keep up to 1 to 2 months.

Roquefort-Camembert Mousse makes an attractive mold and is a change from the ubiquitous holiday cheese balls. Serve it with crackers or slices of salty rye bread.

Roquefort-Camembert Mousse

1 envelope plain gelatin
1/4 cup cold water
2 small triangles Camembert cheese
1/4 pound Roquefort cheese
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 egg, separated
1/2 cup heavy cream

Place gelatin in the cold water and let stand for 5 minutes, then place the gelatin over hot water and dissolve it. Blend the two cheeses together until the mixture is smooth. Beat in the Worcestershire and egg yolk. Add gelatin. Beat egg white until stiff. Whip cream. Fold egg white and whipped cream into cheese mixture. Pour into a 1-pint mold. Chill until firm. Unmold onto a platter and serve with crackers or slices of salty rye bread.

Pickled Mushrooms

2 6-ounce cans whole mushrooms
1/2 cup vinegar
1 cup brown sugar
2 teaspoons mixed pickling spices

Drain mushrooms, reserving juice. Cut mushrooms in quarters. Combine 1/2 cup mushroom broth with vinegar, sugar and spices in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil and pour over quartered mushrooms. Cover tightly and place in the refrigerator for at least 24 hours. Spear with toothpicks to serve.

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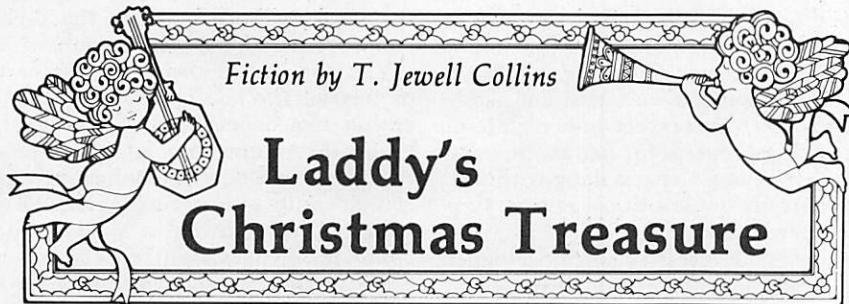
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surviving in style
suddenly
the spruce trees start to sing
inside a rosy icing
& sunshine clatters rainbows
on the lawn:
the purple finches thrive
& string themselves to dry
along the wires,
glittering free
& rich as beads of ruby glass or amethyst
while on the trees
the livelier notes
hang jubilant & long:
each tone a crystal pendant
of delight,
each one a thanksgiving song.

grete goodwin
cape neddick



Fiction by T. Jewell Collins

Laddy's Christmas Treasure

Laddy knew this was going to be a different Christmas. She was planning it that way. When Kristen and Ken, her niece and husband, called to ask her to share their bounty with them, Laddy had said no thank you, quietly but firmly. When they pushed her about her plans, she indicated that she had been invited to be with a close friend.

In a way, it was the truth because Lillian had invited her over to join a group of friends for gifts and dinner; it was just that Laddy had declined Lillian's invitation, also, on the pretense that she expected to be with family. And so her excuse bounced from family to friend and back again.

Laddy lived alone in a tiny gold-colored house with a pitched roof and a center entrance. It was just the right size for one occupant. Laddy liked being alone. Oh, she liked people, too, but gentle people at a friendly distance, like the ones who browsed in the library or the ones who hiked her beloved mountain.

Laddy's husband had been gone seven years, and through necessity Laddy had learned to love the simple pleasures of life. She had worked diligently to deepen and expand her channels of enjoyment. She wrote poems about the woods and mountain she loved so dearly. She photographed the birds, insects, and plants in her postage-stamp yard and the woods beyond the stonewall and on the mountain. She shared her slides with friends and strangers alike at the local library, the nearby college, and the "Y".

Her books, her plants, her folders of writing materials, her black manual Smith-Corona typewriter, and Tinker, her cat, kept her company in the house. And outside? Why there was no end to the company she could find right in her own yard or on the familiar routes she so often hiked—flowers, birds, bugs, and little creatures, Laddy loved them all. Her short, sturdy form seemed in constant partnership with the elements. Rain curled her white bobbed hair; sun browned her round

cheeks and danced in her hazel eyes, and the wind gave her a force against which to move. Her booted feet covered many miles of the countryside surrounding her home for Laddy loved to roam the nearby hills and fields.

Laddy felt her anticipation mount as Christmas day drew near. "This is silly," she thought. "It is childish to get so excited about Christmas, especially when I am planning to spend it away from friends and family." With blueberries frozen from August's harvest, she made a batch of muffins Christmas eve for her Christmas morning breakfast. She set up the little imported tree her husband had presented to her their first Christmas together forty-nine years ago. Then from under the eaves in the front bedroom, she pulled out the box of miniature angels she had collected over the years. These she arranged and rearranged on the mantle, playing with them as a child plays with paper dolls. When she had them in satisfying combinations, she stood back to take in the whole scene. Then she went quickly upstairs again and returned with a worn leather Bible. She sat down in the old rocker and read the story of the birth of the Christ Child. Laddy stroked Tinker's smokey gray back, thinking over the account she had just read and then thinking ahead to her Christmas day. She would follow her star to the mountain and seek the riches it had to offer.

The blueberry muffins tasted good the next morning. Laddy ate them with golden scrambled eggs and orange juice. Then she pulled on her plaid jacket, a red-knit hat, and matching gloves. As usual she had on her hiking boots and her all-wool pants. This was going to be her day. Everyone else in town would be focused on family-centered activities. She would step forth into this new-old holiday, leaving yesterday behind and not reaching for tomorrow. This day bore no relation to those preceding it nor to those following it.

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Laddy's feet clumped along the edge of the road leading to the base of the mountain. Actually it was only a large hill, but it was called Fletcher's Mountain, and Laddy treated it with the respect due a mountain by dressing properly for her ascents and by always taking a snack along with her. This morning it was a bag of raisins, sunflower seeds, and nuts.

As she turned off the road onto Hooper Falls Trail, her anticipation heightened. No matter how many times she climbed Fletcher Mountain, she always did it with an air of expectancy, and she was never disappointed in what she saw. Eagerly her eyes darted up into the bare trees, scanning trunks and limbs for woodpeckers, nuthatches, and possibly a yellow-bellied sapsucker. Then they dropped to the evergreen wood fern beside the waterfall and to the partridge berry with its glossy bronze leaves dotted over with vivid red berries.

A bluejay flew over, uttering his sharp "Thief! Thief!" A few steps later, Laddy's eye caught the bright blue of one of his feathers on the path. The first prize I can take home, she thought, for she wouldn't consider picking any of the growing things she had seen. She tucked the feather in her pocket and turned off the trail to view the waterfall. As she made her way over the rough terrain, eyes looking down to avoid stumbling, she saw a stone-like object on a clear patch of earth. It couldn't be, she murmured, reaching for it with one red-gloved hand. But I'm sure it is. It's an Indian arrowhead! She gazed long and hard at the finely chiseled, perfectly shaped arrowhead resting in the palm of her glove. I knew it, she breathed to herself, I knew I'd find treasures on the mountain today. She was so elated, she was tempted to return home to gloat over her find, but then she remembered that this was only the beginning of this very special day. She met no hikers on the mountain. It was just as she had imagined it would be, still, tranquil, and majestic.

Laddy munched her snack on the return trip down the trail. It tasted good and whetted her appetite for the dinner she had planned for herself, baked chicken and rice, mushrooms (her Christmas present to herself), squash, and hot mince pie. She quickened her pace at the prospects.

After the last dish was washed and the remains of the chicken were wrapped in a damp cloth and placed in the refrigerator, Laddy set a fire and lay on the sofa with her crocheted quilt pulled over her. When she awoke, it was late afternoon. She stretched lazily, then arose and fed the

fire, looking once more at the Biblical story opened on the table in front of her.

Yes, she had followed her star to the mountain; she had brought her gifts of enthusiasm, expectancy, and joy, and had found the waiting treasures. But something was missing from her day. She couldn't quite put her finger on it. All was going as planned, but a shadowy gray cloud hung persistently between her activities and the joy and fulfillment she had expected them to bring.

Laddy pondered the day she had looked forward to for so long. She praised herself for her ingenuity in avoiding the invitations extended to her. She revelled in recalling her walk on the mountain and her "find" of the arrowhead. Tinker came over and rubbed against her leg. Laddy stroked him, still musing over the missing link in her otherwise happy day.

"Of course," she said suddenly to Tinker. "How could I have been so foolish as to think I could have this day all to myself. Good needs to be shared in order to appreciate in value. The good news of Jesus' birth spread far and wide, and here I sit, hoarding the treasures my star led me to." She blushed at her blindness. Then she continued, "Wait a minute, how could I know what I wanted to share until the treasures of the day were first revealed to me." A wave of relief and gratitude swept over her. "Thank you, God," she said humbly.

Laddy leaped into action, phoning Lillian. "How does a warm fire, a light buffet, and Handel's Messiah playing softly in the background sound? Kristen and Ken will be over, too."

"Great!" responded Lillian. "Everyone left two hours ago, and I'm ready to relax. Say, how did your day go with the family?"

"Tell you about it when you get here," said Laddy, truthfully this time. She extended the same invitation to Kristen and Ken.

On her way to the kitchen, she turned on the tiny electric candles adorning the Christmas tree and blew a kiss to her angels on the mantle. It had been a good day, and the best part—the sharing—was yet to come.

Mrs. Collins is a summer resident of North Waterford and a winter resident of Hamden, Conn.





Titcomb's General Store

by Scott Perry

The traditional stop for last-minute provisions on the way up to the Moosehead Lake region has long been Titcomb's General store in Abbot village. Be it a need for a box of bullets, a pair of snowshoes, or a bottle of whiskey, this old country store at the junction of Maine Routes 15 and 16 carries just about anything anyone would need.

And it has been this way for 111 years. According to a 1937 *Bangor Daily News* article, a young entrepreneur named Horace D. Buxton started the business not long before his 14th birthday in 1872. Also a dabbler in pharmaceuticals, Buxton deve-

loped a patent medicine in 1897 which he peddled under the name "Buxton's Cure-all." The label boldly read that it "will cure cramps, colic, colds, cough, summer complaint, sprains, burns, headache, neuralgia, and toothache, and will break up a bad cold in one night." Like most patent medicines of the era, its success was largely attributed to its 18 percent alcohol content—an ingredient that not only elevated its consumers, but also elevated sales, especially during prohibition.

Gradually, the Federal Government put the stopper to patent medicines. In order to stay legal, Buxton had to narrow down his wonder drug's medicinal claims. It was





reduced from "Cureall" to "Rheumatic Cure," and finally to "Specific Compound" before sales fizzled out altogether.

With revenues from his medicine business, Buxton was able to expand his store to provide a wider variety of goods to the Abbot community and to travelers heading for the wilds beyond. He continued to work in his store right up to his death in 1941.

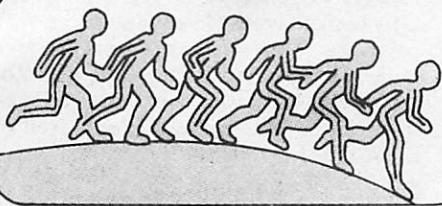
Franklin Titcomb bought the store in 1948 and kept expanding the product line until, as he said, "the seams were ready to burst."

The Titcomb family also resurrected the tradition of cutting ice each winter from nearby Piper Pond.

Today, the ice-cutting operation is carried on by the present store owner, Meinulf Poiss, and a few local men. They still use an ice saw powered by a 1929 Model A Ford engine to cut the massive blocks which are kept in an ice house behind the store and sold to summer people.

Scott Perry, whose inspiring photographs have graced the pages of The Maine Times, The Maine Sunday Telegram, and Time, as well as BitterSweet, is a Farmington-based freelance photojournalist.





Medicine For The Hills

by

Michael A. Lacombe, M.D.

Allegory

(Author's note) As government and big business continue their inexorable encroachment upon American medicine, and as greed and expedience replace commitment and caring, so medical care moves towards that hollow end-point of blended mediocrity found in so many other sectors of our society. In this allegory of medical practice read "hospital" for "hotel," "patient" for "patron." Ask the question, "Who is responsible?"

Custom is habit turned to gold. With the passage of time, we marvel at our customs, wondering why they were not adopted long before. Marvelous also are those rare friendships whose exercises are customary, friendships others view from afar with envy.

The friendship of Jean-Paul and Michel embodied such tradition. By happenstance, they had met on Monday night twenty years before for an evening of commiseration and mutual confession. Now, neither would tolerate any intrusion upon this weekly business meeting. From their meeting came the sustenance and spirit to continue. A sustaining friendship such as this was, to both parties and to the envious villagers, quite obvious and quite valuable.

The businesses of both men shared the same street and served the same clientele. They had, therefore, similar problems and grievances and profited from comparing notes, finding at the same time growth in a supportive friendship. Why should they not, after all, have become close friends? It was now so obvious. But how many of us ever do the obvious? More often we are prone to good intention, procrastination, and finally regret.

I have said that this friendship was quite enviable. It was all of that. For one thing, their intense loyalty to one another was palpable. A careless remark about Jean-Paul, or about Yvette, and Michel's face would darken as he forced the loose tongue to retract the comment and withdraw. And after so many years, it is still mentioned in town about the night the Germans were loudly critical of

Michel's table and were quietly asked by Jean-Paul to check out within the hour.

The loyalty was well known, and envied. More valuable, and not as apparent, was the candor and honesty in the friendship. It was "Michel, you're getting careless with your sauces," and "Jean-Paul, you are too greedy, mon petit." It was "Michel, I am thinking of leaving Yvette." And from an incensed Michel: "Jean-Paul, leave her to us, pig of a friend. We will drive you from Alsace, from France herself. Play with your empty-headed school girls! Leave Yvette for us." (Jean-Paul, of course, did not leave.)

As was customary, each Monday Michel vacuumed the dining room after the luncheon, placed his order for the week, and closed the Auberge de l'Ange for the day. As always, he stood for a few minutes on the edge of the cobblestoned street, hands in suit-coat pockets, cigarette centered in pursed lips. He surveyed his village, the village of his father, of his grandfather, of his ancestors. The l'Ange had been managed by a Garondeau for three centuries, of which Michel was quite proud. He took great delight in telling this to Americans. It made them, he thought, feel young.

To the north the cobblestones ran rapidly out to the country, between the rows of linden trees, past Maurice's farm. Lively Maurice, who provided Michel with frogs' legs for soupe de cuisse grenouille. Maurice, whose family held the secret of the finest goose liver in all of Alsace, and, therefore, in all of the world. Every week Michel stopped at the farm for the goose liver, the poultry meats for terrine, the frogs' legs, and for whatever vegetables were freshest. Each week, with honesty and affection, Michel embraced Maurice and said, "Because of you, Maurice, I have two stars."

A lonely man, Maurice was unable, as Jean-Paul was fond of saying, to open his arms to life. He knew that there was more to pate do foie gras than merely goose liver and therefore viewed Michel's praise with suspicion. He found such



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flattery discomforting and always hastily disengaged from Michel's embrace. Yet, paradoxically, Maurice envied Michel's friendship with Jean-Paul, wondering why life was so empty for him.

To the south, the cobblestones of Rue Charlemagne curved into town, past Jean-Paul's, past the Patisserie Lucien where were found the lightest croissants and best Napoleons in Lembach, past the Cafe du Temps Perdu, a restaurant-turned-tourist-trap, past the red, slate-covered homes airing down comforters. Slowing down, this ancient street, worn smooth by ox carts, by the coming and going of cows to pasture, by the brown-eyed children of Lembach, by steel-helmeted Prussians, by the marching Huns of Wilhelm, by the grinding Panzers of the Wehrmacht, and, most recently, by the inquisitive ramblings of tourists to this forgotten corner of France, slowing now, did this rippled street take in the geraniums, the plum blossoms, the pretty daughters of Rene Bouchard-Martin. Curving away from the church of St. Bernard, past all this seeming contentment, the road rushed out to meet post-war asphalt, to be guided through the Maginot Line, toward the cathedrals of Strassbourg, to the south, and, measured in time, a century away.

Michel, done with his memories, by old habit field-stripped his cigarette, pocketed the butt, and turned south to the Hotel Cheval Blanc and to Jean-Paul, to talk about business.

I would not have you believe that the friendship of Jean-Paul and Michel grew out of some mutual attraction of two perfect men. Both men were exceptional, that is true. But they were far from perfect. Both were terribly, wonderfully, human, afflicted with those frailties and excesses with which we all must contend. For his part, Jean-Paul was overly critical, often melancholy, and a bit of a philanderer as well. When in his company on one of his dark days, one came away feeling responsible for Jean-Paul's moods. On these days, one avoided Jean-Paul and the heavy air around him and simply waited for him to surface into brightness.

Michel, too, had his shortcomings. His temper was far too quick and excessively displayed, even for a Frenchman, and he had the patience of a wild boar. Exposed once to a salesman vending plastic wine glasses, Michel threw him bodily into the street and later settled out of court for 3,000 francs. And can you imagine the scenario displayed by

these two friends when one of Jean-Paul's contentious sulks collided with Michel's pugnacity? This was hardly a bland and dispassionate friendship!

Though each was sometimes difficult to endure, both shared three virtues, which made their deep and abiding friendship inevitable. Their capacity for these virtues stood them apart, rendered them incomparable, led to their pre-eminent success, was the source of such happiness as they enjoyed, and was the well-spring of their friendship. How ironic that neither they nor the villagers knew these virtues to be the cause of their good fortune! They, Michel and Jean-Paul, simply were this way, and the villagers invariably called it luck, inheritance, subornation, or charm. The virtues? Ah, yes, the virtues. Certainly we must examine them; that is essential to our story. But a warning: in the abstract these virtues seem both trite and saintly. They are neither. They may be found in every corner of the world. They are noble virtues, and quite human. An intense caring for people, an uncompromising appreciation of quality, and an insatiable hunger for experience, these are the three virtues. Their interrelated nature is obvious. Lust for experience provoked a searching for quality. Genuine love for people promoted a creation of quality. Experience fed the desire for quality and for sharing. Each virtue is self-nourishing. For who is ever unfulfilled for having loved someone? Who is not enabled from honesty of purpose; who sated with one sunset, one rose?

There is with these virtues also the whole matter of intent. One gives out of benevolence and concern, or from a desire for recognition and secondary gain. One does the task well because of concern for quality or half-well for expediency's sake. One lives, or postpones experience for material wants, power, or social standing (finding suddenly that life is over).

With Jean-Paul and Michel, their intent was simply to care for others, to pursue Quality, and to savor life's experiences. The result was success beyond imagination. But that was not their intent! People travelled to Lembach principally to

stay at Cheval Blanc and to dine at l'Ange. They did so in great numbers. One booked weeks in advance for either privilege. The recognition of the two men was inevitable. But that was not their intent! When a new bistro opened in Strassbourg, the owner motored to Lembach for advice from those two giants of hospitality. "No arrogance of any sort," admonished Jean-Paul. "Nothing of plastic," insisted Michel. And thus, too, did the power come. But that was never their intent!

Neither man was concerned with the ephemeral, material acquisition, social standing, the appearance of the well-appointed. These things did not matter to them. Life for them meant Matisse, Gide, Mont Blanc, Giacometti, Casals, Tuscany, Miro, fraises des bois. Their demeanor, the decor of their establishments, everything about them manifested these priorities.

When newlyweds might arrive, with much hope and little money, Yvette would alert Jean-Paul, who himself would open the doors. As lost relatives were they greeted, shown to the best rooms and given champagne compliments of Yvette, croissants and cafe-au-lait compliments of the house, and then asked rather bashfully by Jean-Paul how they found everything. Is it any wonder that they returned, on anniversary, year after year?

The Monday night meetings of Jean-Paul and Michel nourished their virtue. They had only to drive for two hours east to dine at Baden-Baden to experience arrogance and resolve that it would never enter their own businesses. Jean-Paul felt that this was an essential event, to sensitize themselves to the potential crippling obsequiousness dwelling within everyone. Occasional journeys to Paris reminded them that there were better pates, other ways of doing things, excellence yet unknown to them.

As much as they were self-nourishing, supportive of the friendship, and adventuresome, these Monday night meetings were also vitally educational and beneficial to those served by Jean-Paul and Michel, whose standards as a result remained high. The two men invested their best skills to produce the finest results possible, never with an eye to income or cheap sentiment. People entered l'Ange as guests, not as menial domestics. They left confident of having experienced the best possible that Michel and his staff could deliver.

One might contend that these virtues would better have been found in other

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men of Lembach. Why not, for example, in Doctor Gerardin, ever intent on his bank book, or Monsieur St. Pierre, overly fond of wine and the widow Mme. Robillard. But, as they say in America, it is not always in the deck of

cards. Jean-Paul and Michel were innkeeper and restaurateur by family tradition. But as men, they were as they were by some other authority.

(concluded in next issue)

CRUCIFORM

Love came down
at Christmas;
Christ was born.

Christ spent His days in healing,
His Father's word fulfilling,
His perfect love revealing.

Lo! a cross
silhouette
against sky.
Why the cross
and death? My
sin is why.

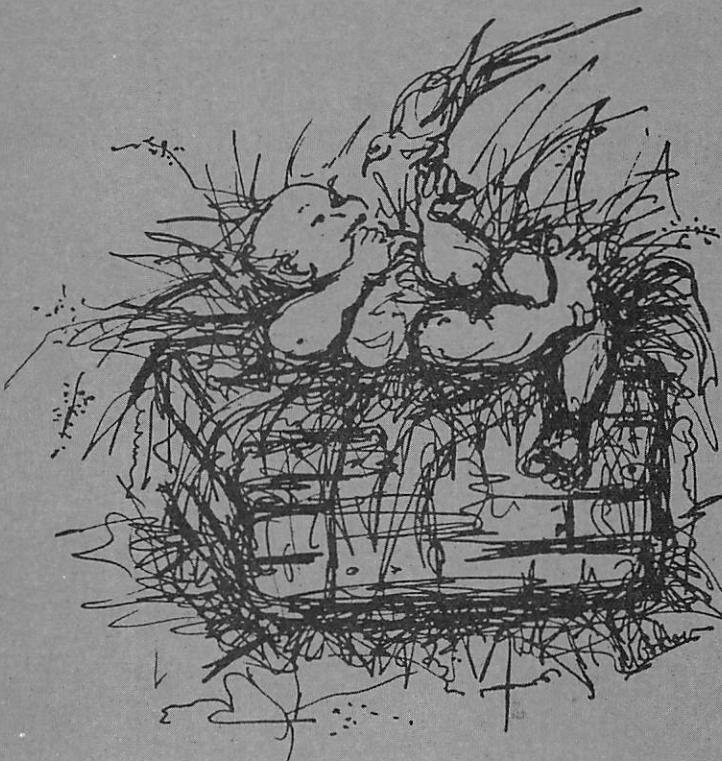
Dorothy Hamann
South Portland

Drawing
Marion Golden

WINTER CAROL

Unexclusive be
this winter carol's echoes
like one who'd go beyond all walls
from an old inn shed through Pilate's jail
to just crossed beams
to find, know, be, God's child.

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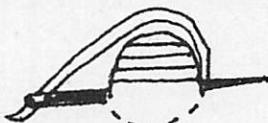
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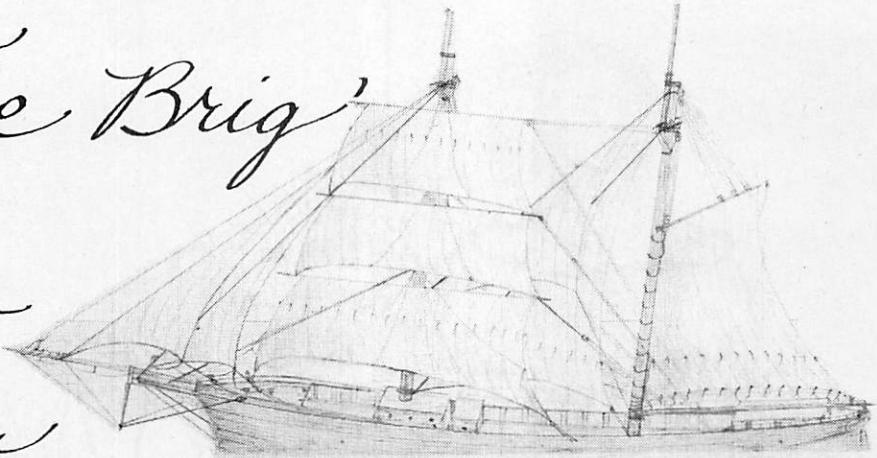


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Aboard The Brig' "Rebecca" 1862



Poetry of the Sea

L. Sargent Fickett was an officer on the sailing ship "Rebecca" in 1862. In an old ship's log he recorded the meanderings of his mind—including poetry to his comrades, mother, father, wife, child . . . and a good number of other women, as well. Included among the yellowed pages were sketches such as the "Frank Clark" (above) and rather vaguely remembered females (see next page); as well as cryptic notes about medicine given to sailors "for venereal disease." The "Rebecca" must have been a long time at sea! Old log courtesy of Mr. Archie Taylor, Portland.

ACROSTIC

Dear Wife of my bosom, the fondest and best,
Enraptured I think of past happy hours.
Like a bird that is mated away from its nest,
I took thee from thine to enliven my bowers.
And now tho' full many a year has gone by
Fondly I dwell on thy sweet smiling face.
I love thee as well, I would thou were nigh.
Come rest in this bosom, thou angel of grace,
Kind words shall be thine, Love forever and aye
Each wish of thy heart be thine 'ere 'tis made,
Thy pathway all sunshine, thy spirits all gay,
Til the love of our youth in the grave shall be laid.

TO MY MOTHER

Oft at midnight's starry hour
When winds are light and free
No murky clouds around us lower
To win my thoughts from thee,
Then will I find my heart confessing
How often I received your blessing.

And when dark clouds obscure the sky,
The pale moon sinks to rest,
And many dangers 'fore me rise
O'er ocean's foaming crest.
Then wander back my thoughts to thee
And home in all its purity.

But soon the ship deserves my care
The light sails taken in.
Then all things for a gale prepare
And bring her to the wind.
The lightning's flash, the thunder's roar,
My heart's with thee upon the shore.

We "man" the halyards, sheets and brails
Amid the sleet and rain,
And safely furl each flowing sail
And make all snug again.
Although I watch the foaming sea
My thoughts are still at home with thee.

by L. Sargent Fickett
written on board the Brig "Rebecca"
at sea, Oct. 25th, 1861
My Birthday

TO ANNIE FICKETT

Annie, fairest of earth's flowers
That blooms 'mid refreshing showers
Of love and truth,
Be ever kind to those you love
(Whom you expect to meet above)
In happy youth.

by L. S. Fickett
To his Daughter

LINES ON THE DEATH OF JOHN WALLACE

Respectfully dedicated to his sister Maria

Your brother's gone—he whom you loved
Above all earthly treasure
To dwell in endless joys above
Beyond the sky of azure.

As 'neath old ocean's foaming crest
Bright sol to rest was sinking
The thoughts of home had crost his breast
And of loved ones he was thinking.

His thoughts were of his mother's smile
His sister's love endearing,
His father, brothers, too—the while
His soul to Heaven was nearing.

While loving Angels hovered 'round
To guide his soul to Heaven,
His listening ear had caught the sound
Of Angels' whispers—forgiven.

He called his mess-mates to his side,
His face quite flushed with fever,
"O, tell my Mother when I died
I sorrowed but to leave her."

"O, tell her I am ready now
The thread of life to sever,
Before God's Holy Will to bow
And dwell with Him forever."

His last fond words of love did flow
In accents for another.
In measured tones so soft and low:
"I leave thee, O My Mother!"

"FICKETT'S LAMENT — by HIMSELF

How sad and gloomy is my lot
Born but to die and be forgot,
"Name unrecorded on historic page"
Unnoticed by a future age.

And, backward as my eye I cast,
And memory views the bitter past—
To feel that tho' my race is run,
The laurel wreath I have not won.

Oh, many a long and anxious hour
I've sought in vain the muse's power,
Through life my only constant aim
Has been to reach the height of fame.

Tis all in vain, when life is o'er
The world will hear my name no more.
For me no pitying tear will fall,
They'll say—he's dead—and that is all.

A VALENTINE

Fairest *****, lovely maid,
May your beauty never fade,
Nor you from virtue stray.
May your youth be ever fair,
With rosy cheeks and raven hair,
And disposition gay.

May your house be neat and snug,
Baby playing on the rug,
In happiness divine.
May your friends be good and true
As friendship ever loves to view
And sorrow ne'er be thine.

May your life pass happy by
Nor e'er know a cause to sigh,
But dwell in peace and love.
And when life is safely o'er
May your soul then upward soar
And rest with God above.

by L. Sargent Fickett
Feb. 14th, 1862
Off Canary Islands



TO A LADY I ONCE MET AT MILLBRIDGE, MAINE

I met this morn a Maiden fair
Who did my raptured soul ensnare.
Now little Cupid aimed the dart
And struck me piercing through the heart.

She pass'd me with a winning smile
Which did my wayward heart beguile,
But what most surely turned my brain—
I never saw this maid again.

Yet from the Elysian fields
Blind Cupid may the arrow wield,
And cause this maid to feel the smart
That rankles still within my heart,

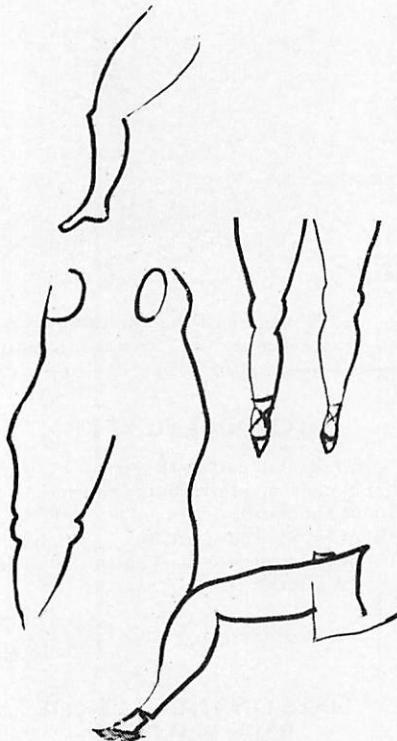
I'd languish on her snowy breast
And in her loving arms be prest
To taste the nectar from her lip
Fit morsel for the Gods to sip.

by L. Sargent Fickett
Commanding Brig "Rebecca"
Off the Isle of Palma
Feb. 17th, 1862

THE EXCURSION

Ye Gods above, inspire my soul
And seat me o'er the flowing bowl,
That I may of the nectar sip
And languish on thy rosy lip.

Could I possess those charms divine,
I'd clasp you in these arms of mine
And pant upon your lovely breast—
Gay fancy then might dream the rest.



TO KATE

No Grecian pen could ever raise
In ancient Hellen's brightest days
The name of Knight or noble dame
That more deserves the wreath of fame.

From her admirer
Fickett

TO —

Once more I string my silent Lyre
And flowery banks of Lethe's stream
And trembling, touch the tuneful wire
In numbers soft as Sappho's dream.

O muse, inspire my wayward pen
And bathe me in the crystal spring,
And give to me a power divine
That I may of thy virtues sing.

Not Cleopatra's or Helen's grace
Could win my love from thee.
Thy locks the Celtic bards might praise
And heart in all its purity

Held not the tales that flatterers tell
And softly whisper in thine ear,
Be ever mine, sweet Asphodel
And I'll protect thee from all fear.

And when thy spirit takes its flight
May I, sweet one, be laid to rest
With thee 'mid flowery gardens bright
And both forevermore be blest.

PRAYER

O Thou! Who rul'st the winds and waves,
Come guide us on our way.
And cause fair winds out sails to lave
O! Bid us not to stay.

O! grant that we may onward steer
With sweet and pleasant gales
That we may get the trade winds here
To fill our swelling sails.

We long to reach our native homes,
Grant this, we humbly pray.
Lord, make us all a happy band
And speed us on our way.

TO THE WHISKEY BOTTLE

The old whiskey bottle—how pure to the eye
Was the liquid that flowed to the glass.
To see thee near empty, it makes my heart sigh
For we've drained all thy life out at last.

But dear whiskey bottle, tho' weary and weak
We'll fill thee again on the morrow
And once more o'er the top thy liquid will leak
Then soon thou will drown all our sorrow.

But dear whiskey bottle, thy life soon must end,
They spirits are now getting low.
The next whiskey bottle I have for a friend
May its spirits eternally flow.

I NEVER MEAN TO MARRY

I've courted both old and young
And still you see I tarry
Women ne'er can hold their tongues,
I never mean to marry.

I've jilted Sal and saucy Nell
And lively Jane and Mary.
The next was Julia, then Miss Bell.
I never mean to marry.

Next on the list was Lizzie Gray,
Cheerful as any fairy,
But she must always have her way.
I never mean to marry.

Next lovely Kate was my delight
'Til I caught her kissing Harry.
I could not think that that was right,
I never mean to marry.

Dear to my heart was Fanny Clark
And that little vixen Laurie,
I've often kissed them in the dark.
I never mean to marry.

There's one I loved, but she is wed,
My darling little Carrie.
And, as it's so, I'll go to bed,
Determined not to marry.

But then perhaps the artful God
Beside my bed will tarry,
And should he pierce me with his rod,
Why then, I'd have to marry.

by L. Sargent Fickett

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SAGA OF SODOM SWAMP

November swept on Maine that year with storm:

no piled-on garments kept a body warm in windy fields or woods: and on the first day, Nancy Chase awoke to find the worst yet seen. The rain poured down in torrents; sleet and snow fell, intermixed, as though defeat was planned before-time by the atmosphere for those who dared to hunt the white-tailed deer.

The clock had not struck five when she arose and struggled into layers of hunting clothes: long insulated underwear, bright red warm jacket, pants and helmet for her head, thick gloves, high boots and socks of knitted wool...

her outfit much more stout than beautiful. She ate a hasty meal as she got dressed with one eye on the clock as though obsessed.

The sky was pearlizing into faintest gray above the rough dirt road along her way to meet her brother Donald and her Dad, and Marion, Don's wife. The scheme they had concocted called for quite an early start.

They studied an old geodetic chart so each one knew the landmarks and the trail to be pursued. It would not do to fail, because the vicious Sodom Swamp was thick with alders, tall sharo reeds, and broken stick-like stubs, concealing hidden waterways: a man could well be lost within its maze.

In fifty-six a hunter dropped from sight: although the search continued all that night and on for weeks, his body was not found.

In such quagmires predators abound.

In sixty-two his persevering son Retrieved his bones, some rags, his rusted gun. The foxes, wildcats and majestic moose are often seen among the pines and spruce and hemlocks. Sometimes a hungry bear will postpone hibernation to browse there. If they are being harried far and wide, the deer would likely choose this place to hide.

Before they left the house, her mother said, just as a joke, "Now Nance, don't waste your lead

on moose for that's against the law; just bring a bobcat or a bear or some such thing."

They reached the knoll from which they could survey

the Sodom Swamp just at the break of day. Each girl immediately took her stand at predetermined points as they had planned, while Don and Dad kept going through the harsh

tall brush to reach the far side of the marsh.

The silence grew profound as Nancy stood quite motionless and watched the nearby wood. The falling rain was all that could be heard except for now and then a passing bird.

Her heart beat strongly in her ear, quite loud enough, she thought, to scare the deer,

While every twig that snapped or leaf that fell reverberated like a clanging bell.



Before an hour had passed she was wet through, but stayed in place as she was taught to do, (with hunters it's a fundamental sin to leave the post that they have set you in for those who travel many miles to "drive" the deer, want you in place when they arrive). Another thing taught Nancy by her Dad was...shooting anything but deer is bad when you are hunting that elusive game. Her gun was ready held at easy aim... all ninety pounds of her aware, alert: her ears and eyes were straining till they hurt.

Now what was that? A stealthy movement sensed, the faintest whisper of a sound: she tensed and imperceptibly glanced to the right. Not twenty feet from her, his green eyes bright,

a bobcat crouched beneath a fallen fir, his evil face and form an ugly blur. Instinctively she raised the loaded gun and fired once: The creature spun and disappeared from sight: She shot once more, then everything was quiet as before.

She still maintained her station, though she shook,

repressing her desire to have a look: And now that it was over, second thought caused her to wonder what it was she shot. With all the joking when they started out, could she have been deluded? Nancy's doubt grew greater: might have been a water rat transformed by wishful thinking to a 'cat': perhaps it was a squirrel or a hare: her Dad would be provoked when he got there.

When Father finally emerged, cold, wet, and tired from his fruitless quest, he set himself upon a log and said, "I heard a shot, or was it two? And I inferred you fired at a deer. What happened here?" The tale that Nancy told him sounded queer: a bobcat seldom skulks along by day but chooses nighttime hours to seek his prey.

However, when they went along the track, they found the bobcat lying on his back with one shot down through his breast quite dead. No longer would the beast infest

the swampland, slaughtering the helpless fawn, the rabbit and the fox. His lips were drawn back in a wicked snarl. Although his eyes were slowly losing luster, their surprise at such a fate was mirrored: Still, a blaze of hatred flashed beneath the lifeless glaze.

They carried him back to the car and found some other hunters there. All stood around exclaiming with amazement at the feat of a mere girl who looked so frail and sweet. At thirty pounds, the bobcat weighed one-third as much as Nancy's scales displayed. When Marion and Donald came in sight, they shouted with exuberant delight: Her mother, too, was overwhelmed to see That Nancy took her small joke literally.

A wish of years was satisfied: a green felt mat now backs the bobcat's hide: his eye, replaced by life-like green glass ball, still gleams malevolently from the wall.

Otta Louise Chase
Sweden

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... Page 20 Family Memories

was no fire department in town, and the men were off working in the woods, so we were helpless. I grabbed my coat, putting it on as I ran over the snowy fields, shouting, "Fire! Fire!"

In a few minutes I saw the man running toward me, and then dashing into the barn where they seized a ladder and a rope. With these they ran to the house, and as Harold stood the ladder against it, he climbed it and tied the rope around the chimney. When he let the rope down to the ground his father already had two pails full of water, pumped from the well. He tied one pail on to the rope which Harold raised and poured on the roof, which was now ablaze. As soon as the pail was empty he lowered it and his father filled it from the pail he had in reserve. This process went on for fifteen or twenty minutes before the fire was out, to our immense relief. (I was told that once a well-meaning neighbor came to put out such a fire, and as the rope was let down he untied it, and tied on a full pail!!)

As Christmas approached Mother Rich and I were busy making gifts and shopping in the village stores. Harold brought a beautiful fir tree from the woods and set it up in the sitting room. Trimmed with strings of popcorn and cranberries and lighted by small candles it was very lovely. On Christmas morning we gathered around the tree to receive our gifts and to watch Stuart's excitement and happiness.

He was overwhelmed by all the toys he received, and played with them all day. In the evening we went over to the Eames' who had their tree at night. We all exchanged gifts and had a merry time.

January was another cold, snowy month with the men working in the woods and my mother-in-law and I busy about the house and "keeping the home fires burning." (But not too vigorously.)

The latter part of February and most of March were spent making maple syrup. The men worked down in the sap woods, boiling the sap in a large cauldron over an open fire. Then when it was partly thickened they carried pails of it to the house where Mother Rich boiled it some more and purified it. She did the latter by adding a little milk to the syrup, so that dirt and debris rose to the top where it was skimmed off. Now it was ready to pour into glass jars and be stored down cellar, later to be enjoyed on pancakes and hot biscuits. There was enough syrup to last us for several months, so all the labor spent in making it was worthwhile.

The month of May was an extra busy one with all the planting to be done, and the general cleaning-up after winter. Storm doors and windows were removed and screens put in their place.

For Mother Rich it was time to make ready her flower beds, and start seedlings in the house.

Now we've come full circle to June, back to the time when we arrived at the farm. It had been a happy and rewarding year, and we had seen Stuart grow from a baby to a toddler, running around and getting into mischief.

As I look back on it now, at 85, I can't help wishing I were young again, and on THE FARM!

Evelyn Frary Rich
Eugene, Oregon

ICE STORM

The dawn revealed a crystal world,
Trees and shrubs all icy curled.
During the night the storm came in
Leaving its mark so opaline.
A stalk of last Fall's stand of corn
Became the glass horn of a unicorn.
Dead weeds poking up from the ground
Were icicles growing upside down.
The crusted snow all icy pearly
Sparkled and shone in this crystal world,
And children sliding on the crust
Were soon coated with a silver dust.

J. Nesbitt Lello
Scarborough

NOVEMBER'S NAME

Etched on the mirror-glass
of an early morning
across the haze
of a Maine lake
I saw November's Name
Melancholy . . .
Serene . . .
Harsh, caressing days
of waiting
Summer's folly vanished
in the woodsmoke
of winter thoughts
and the sky slid gray
and solemn
across a cinnamon land.
In the rattle
of the last leaf
on the old oak
by the pasture wall
I heard the last days
of autumn
echoing . . .
fading . . .

and slipping away
and I saw November's name.

The Unknown Poet
The Outback



Dear Carolyn,

(Part III)

November, 1983

Dear Carolyn,

If I remember correctly, I left you as the four travelling companions were resting at a campground in Iowa. July 3, 1928, found us rested again and eager to go on. We even began to notice the wildflowers that were new to us—among them a long-petaled, pink sort of daisy that went limp almost as soon as it was picked; miniature yellow sunflowers which, we were told, grew from seeds the Mormons had scattered as they travelled west to Utah; a delicate white Iceland poppy; sagebrush; and our first wild cactus. Whit was so intrigued by the yellow-blossomed ones that she dug one up and mailed it home, successfully, to her mother. Birds and wild rabbits also abounded, and, later, we were intrigued to see prairie dogs.

When we reached Sioux City, where we had intended to stop, it seemed so large and busy we decided to move on and cross the muddy Missouri River into Nebraska. What a contrast! The country seemed poor, uninhabited, and hilly, with only tiny, dirty towns miles apart. The roads were dusty with a clay-like base, and we were warned of their danger when wet. This was the famous *gumbo* mud—when thoroughly wet, as after a heavy rain, roads were passable, but when rainfall was light they became a slippery, gooey black surface that required putting on our chains and driving in low or second gear all the time. The surface would roll up in balls under a car, and, when dry, become ruts as hard as concrete.

So, on July 3, when we reached the little town of Laurel and found the Gladstone Hotel in the very center of town, we decided our safest course was to take refuge there. It was, you will note, the night before the 4th, and from dark until midnight local celebrators shot off cannons continuously, and practically under our windows. At daybreak, wakened by the sound of a very loud bugle, we looked out to see a solemn flag-raising ceremony, and found ourselves deeply moved to be so properly reminded of our proud

heritage as Americans.

A good breakfast and we four girls were off—by more cornfields on straight, wide roads, with only birds for wildlife. By late afternoon, we began to see sleek, clean horses and mules in the fields, and many beef cattle. The country was so flat, we could see Valentine, the town we planned to stop in, when it was six miles away! Though the roads continued to be chiefly dirt or gravel, we encountered one place that was merely a single path with grass growing between the ruts, winding in among fields and hills. This was not a detour—it was the actual, numbered crosscountry highway.

Our tires began to suffer from both the heat and the roads, so we had practice changing and patching them between garage stops. Keeping water in the Model A's radiator also began to be a problem, but wherever we stopped, we found the people friendly and helpful, and the tall, lanky men very much to our taste!

At Chadron, we decided we had had enough of Nebraska, so we headed north for the Black Hills and Badlands of South Dakota. Since natural scenery does not change much over the years, even today I highly recommend that area for unusual and breath-taking sights. It is there, in Custer State Park, that the famous heads of presidents have been carved or chiselled out of the great cliff of Mt. Rushmore by Gutzon Borglum. President Coolidge had dedicated Mt. Rushmore just the year before in 1927—and even with 25 men working at it continuously, the first face had not been completed when we were there. The enormity of the project was impressive.

In South Dakota we began to see the colored canyons and bluffs; and real copper-skinned Indians, the women wearing brightly-colored shawls and kerchiefs, their dresses as short as ours. The black, black hair of both men and women hung in braids, and the squaws seemed always

to follow the men, a few paces behind. Though we met Indians in the southwest, too, I never recall seeing men and women walking abreast. Always, the woman stayed her proper distance behind the man.

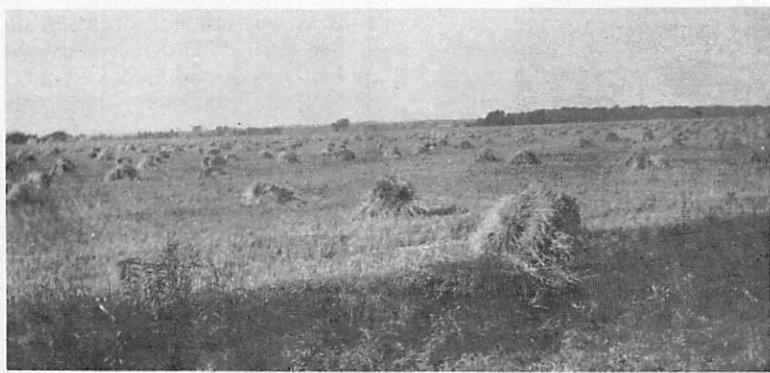
Here, too, we became aware that we were no longer getting much paper money in change. It always came in large and cumbersome (to us) silver dollars.

At Hot Springs, South Dakota, we were proudly shown the great Evans Plunge, presumably the largest in the world then—a 200 x 50-foot swimming pool fed by sixteen warm natural springs. We encountered that word "plunge" for swimming pool several times in the west—and assumed it was so named because people plunged or dove into it.

From the top of Look-Out Mountain, one realized how aptly named this region was, for the heavily pine-forested hills actually looked black rather than green. The hills were pretty awful for our car to climb, but the views were always worth it. Here, in these hills, we encountered our first U.S. Game Preserve with herds of buffalo and large-eared muledeer.

The justly famous Needles Road, unlike anything I have since seen, was 27 miles of gray-brown, treeless, stark, eroded up-thrusts of rock, like giant needles. Shortly beyond them, nestled high up among other mountains, off the road to Hill City, was a gorgeous deep-blue sylvan lake, small; with white swans swimming on it, rugged treeless cliffs rising sternly out of it; and evergreen and birch-covered mountains beyond that for contrast. What a place for an artist!

From here, our road was all down hill—22 miles of hairpin curves that necessitated travelling in second gear. Since there were no guard rails, the drop-offs at the sides were truly frightening. We finally reached Deadwood, right in the valley between all those mountains, a practically one-street town with its houses built on the sides of the mountains on both sides



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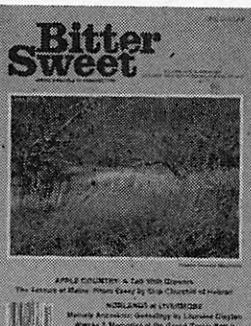
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of the street. Then, out of the valley we climbed again, through thundershowers and hail on our way to Wyoming.

Here, the roads were red clay and gravel and we began to see the reddish buttes rising everywhere—distinctive because of their flat tops. Now, too, we began to see ranches.

But alas! The rain had begun to fall in earnest, and the curving roads were once again made of that infamous slippery gumbo that prohibited travel. Our only choice was to find shelter at the first town—Sundance, Wyoming, where all the sidewalks were made of wood. We joined other delayed tourists in the only hotel in town. I remember it chiefly because the food was so awful and it had no bathrooms—only outhouses at the end of the boardwalks.

But there were bonuses, such as seeing our first real cowboy with high heels, spurs, and all, clanking along the boardwalk. We noted, too, that girl campers in the West wore blue overalls instead of knickers like ours.

At one o'clock the next day, thinking anything must surely be better than Sundance, we decided to chance driving on, in spite of the showers. Foolish people! In one hour, even with chains on our tires and travelling in second gear, we had gone only ten miles. We had company, too, for eight other cars, hoping to get through, waited with us at the side of the road. At the first break in the rain, we started again and, in six hours, we had gone through only 26 miles of that mud and water. Whenever we met a less-lucky car stuck in the mud, it took several men with long poles to prod or ease each car around the stuck vehicle. My fingernails were chewed to the quick.

At last we reached a town—Carlile. It had one gas station, two barns, one house, and one store. The next town was 23 miles to the west. So we, as did the other travellers, put up our tent on the steep hillside and braced our feet on our suitcases to keep from sliding right through the tent.

Next day, the rain had stopped but the roads were now all ruts, and the only food available was fruit. One hundred fifty seven miles of driving brought us to Buffalo and a 3:30 p.m. dinner. Our bonuses this day were glorious scenery, wild prairie dogs and grouse, and live cowboys at work with cattle.

Cody, Wyoming, was just ahead. We had only to cross 9,666-ft. high Big Horn Mountain, its permanent snowfields bordered with forget-me-nots, bluebells and lupine, and descend the winding roads

through great canyons of red, blue, purple, and yellow to skirt the fascinating mesas.

By this time, we found to our consternation that second gear on our Model A would not hold. But waiting for the car to be fixed in Cody gave us time to see Shoshone Dam (then the second-highest dam in the world), to experience cooking with natural gas, and to visit Buffalo Bill's house.

On July 11th we went in the Cody entrance to Yellowstone National Park (\$3.00 entrance fee) to experience all its wonders and beauties for three days. You have been there, Carolyn, so I need not tell you of its fascination for girls from New England. We saw the bears which appeared from nowhere and shambled into the roads; we experienced the mosquitoes, though we had been assured there would not be any. I think the chief thing we saw which is no longer available was a tremendous colored cascade of hot springs. The area changes, as you know, and though everyone sees mud and hot springs and water geysers, they are not always the same ones. Only Old Faithful seems to spout its one hundred fifty-foot stream of steam and water the same every year. We saw it spout twice.

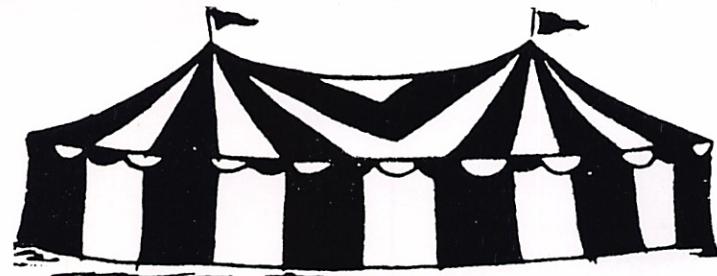
Gas and groceries were very reasonable in the park in 1928, but expensive at the entrances. Gas, for example, was 26-28¢ in the park and 40¢ just outside. Incidentally, you can tell your dad, in answer to his questions, that the average cost of our gas the whole trip was 22¢, and we averaged about 22 miles to the gallon. In all, we used about four hundred gallons of gas and sixty quarts of oil. Tires were rather a problem and needed what seemed like frequent changes and patching, but considering the state of some of the roads, that is not surprising. I don't have accurate figures on tires.

After three days we left the park with regret, for one could enjoy many days there. We came via the west entrance to Montana and Idaho and Utah—crossing the level Continental Divide en route. Late at night on July 13, we reached Salt Lake City. Since they had irrigation, the land around there seemed very prosperous, and fruit trees abounded. Fruit stands were numerous and their apricots and cherries were delicious.

In my next letter, dear granddaughter, I will tell you more about Salt Lake and our trip into California.

Love,
Grandma Harlow

Continued next month



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